

# 2010 Louisiana Wild Turkey Report







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Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries  
National Wild Turkey Federation

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National Wild Turkey Federation



## A MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

The wild turkey population in Louisiana, once in decline, has been replenished through the dedicated efforts of Wildlife Division biologists and support staff of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. As a result, outdoorsmen and women enjoy the hunting opportunities provided in Louisiana from early September dove season through small game, deer and duck season, and then turkey season annually in March and April.

I remember my first wild turkey taken at the age of 12 with a bolt action .410 shotgun near Oak Ridge on a hunt with my father and many enjoyable spring turkey hunts in the years since. The steady improvement of our state's turkey numbers since restocking began in 1962 have brought more hunters into the ranks of turkey hunting enthusiasts. The most recent hunter surveys indicate there are about 18,000 resident hunters who participate in the annual spring season.

Progress continues to be made on habitat restoration throughout the state, and that effort should bolster wild turkey numbers in the years ahead. It is my hope that the worst Gulf hurricane seasons in recent history and the worst man-made environmental disaster in this country's history are behind us, so that recovery work can continue uninterrupted. Habitat management is the primary mission we serve, and our field staff resources need to be focused there in the years ahead.



Robert Barham, *LDWF Secretary*

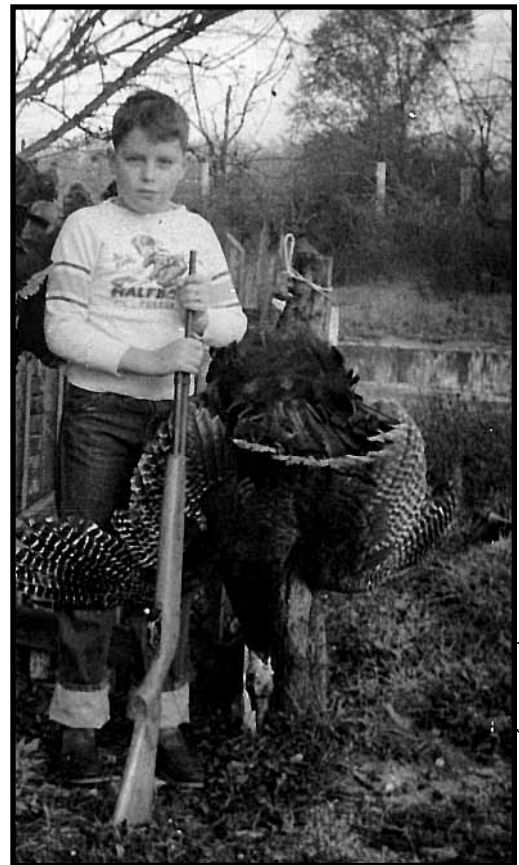


Photo provided by Robert Barham

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# INTRODUCTION

During the years following World War II, Louisiana's wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo silvestris*) population was at its lowest point. In 1946 it was reported that only 14 isolated flocks totaling less than 1,500 wild turkeys remained throughout the state. Biologists feared that the population might become completely extirpated from the state. This prompted efforts to bolster dwindling numbers with pen-reared "wild" turkeys, a project that was abandoned after several years of failure. By the 1960s, advances in cannon net technology allowed wildlife managers to trap native wild turkeys for restocking. Wild turkey numbers soon began to increase. Most of Louisiana's restocking was accomplished from the mid 1960s through the late 1990s. During this period of success, many farms left fallow were planted with trees during the Great Depression, which matured into suitable habitat ripe for an expanding turkey population. The word "conservation" took on new meaning for many older hunters that lived through the lean years and wanted something better for the next generation. Conscientious landowners from areas where turkeys occurred graciously shared this precious resource for restocking areas of the state where they did not exist. During this same period many large industrial timber company forests formerly open to unrestricted hunting, were leased to hunting clubs serious about result-oriented wildlife management. Citizens across the state worked together with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) to protect newly established turkey populations both on public and private lands. Countless LDWF employees worked day and night during these "restocking" years, led by wild turkey program leaders like Dan Dennett, Danny Timmer and Larry Savage. Numerous region managers, biologists, wildlife technicians, other LDWF employees, and volunteers unnamed in this report are the true unsung heroes of this effort. Through trials, tribulations and toil, they overcame many obstacles to make it happen. Another major partner in this effort was the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf). Each year NWTf fund raising banquets occur across the state to raise money for wild turkey conservation. National, state and local NWTf chapters continue to support a variety of Louisiana turkey projects. By funding equipment, habitat work, education, research, and even land acquisitions, the NWTf continues to be an essential partner in local and national wild turkey conservation efforts. Special thanks go to the Louisiana Chapter of the NWTf for funding the publication of this report.

The Pittman Robertson Fund must also be acknowledged for its long-term funding of state wildlife agency research, education, wildlife management areas, and much more. Many wildlife species, including the wild turkey, simply would not be as abundant today without support from this fund. Established by Congress in 1937, the Pittman Robertson Act created a dependable revenue source to support state wildlife conservation efforts across the nation. These funds are generated by a tax on hunting equipment, making hunters one of the leading financial supporter of conservation efforts in the United States.

Additional funding for wild turkeys within Louisiana is provided through the sale of turkey licenses and the wild turkey prestige license plate. These funds established by the Louisiana Legislature are specifically dedicated for wild turkey habitat restoration and enhancement, restocking, research, and land acquisition projects.

The following Wild Turkey Report contains information on production, restoration, harvest and recent research, and other biological information regarding Louisiana wild turkeys. It is hoped that in sharing this, those most appreciative of the species will become more familiar with its current status.



James C. Davis

The moment of rocket net firing and capture of three wild gobblers.





Brandon Stafford

## WILD TURKEY PROGRAM LEADER'S REPORT

by Jimmy Stafford

*Wild Turkey & Resident Small Game Program  
Leader*

Though only 4 years old, I well remember my first encounter with a Louisiana wild turkey in the pine "flatwoods" of St. Tammany Parish. As instructed, I quietly sat beside a large pine and watched as my dad stalked this rare game bird that, until this moment, I had only heard stories of. After several minutes of inching toward the turkey, Dad rounded a bend in the trail, disappearing from my view. At this point I nervously stood up, and the turkey flew. Firing three rapid shots, Dad managed to down the bird. Immediately I ran toward him and the turkey. To my surprise Dad began yelling loudly for me to stop, while he ran as fast as possible in my direction. Little did I know that during his stalk, he was forced to maneuver around a rather aggressive cottonmouth that I was about to unknowingly encounter. I now laugh and think to myself, "welcome to Louisiana turkey

hunting." Once rescued from this peril, we again headed for the downed turkey. At first sight, I was mesmerized by its beauty. The iridescence and perfect blend of earth tone feathers was unlike any bird I had ever seen. I would spend the next 11 years pursuing this species before harvesting my first one at the age of 15. During many of these early turkey seasons, I would fail to see or hear a single turkey gobbler. Nowadays, many take it as a personal insult if a single hunt occurs without hearing a gobbling turkey.

Thanks to the efforts of so many that have worked from then until now to restore wild turkeys, they now occur in virtually all suitable habitats within Louisiana. The few isolated areas currently without turkeys nearly all occur within 10 miles, the generally accepted expansion range, of existing populations. Compared to many of our neighboring states, Louisiana comes up a little short in the amount of turkey habitat, making it essential that what we have is managed to its fullest potential. Today much of Louisiana's highest quality habitat has been cleared for other purposes. Urbanization and large-scale agricultural and other changed land uses have carved away much of the state's former wild turkey range. Less than 45 percent of the state is currently forested. Of this forested acreage, about 88 percent is privately owned prompting LDWF wildlife managers to focus on private landowner assistance. Considerable manpower and resources have been dedicated to helping private landowners meet their personal wildlife management goals. The Landowners For Wildlife program initiated in 2008 connects wildlife biologists with landowners seeking professional wildlife management guidance. The future of sustainable wild turkey numbers in Louisiana is very closely tied to what happens on these private lands. State and federal forest management programs currently available to private landowners are working to improve wildlife habitat across the state. Such programs have resulted in significant reforestation of central and north Louisiana river delta regions that will eventually increase turkey habitat.

Research also plays a vital role in Louisiana's wild turkey program. Ongoing studies, as well as past research, continues to shed light on the biology of the species. This information helps managers focus efforts on management strategies that produce the most benefit to turkeys. Results from recent studies suggest that turkey populations may be much more influenced by regulatory decisions than previously thought. With increasing research technologies, even more will be learned in future years about turkeys, which should result in a greater understanding of how the activities of man influence their numbers.

The LDWF's goal and mission is to see that wild turkeys continue to thrive so that future generations can enjoy memory-making wild turkey encounters for years to come.

# NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION REPORT

By Luke Lewis  
*NWTF Regional Biologist*

Since 1985 the Louisiana Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation (LWTF) has contributed \$1,992,482 to support projects within the state. In "Habitat Enhancement" alone LWTF has provided \$615,710 toward projects that have impacted approximately 71,312 acres. LWTF has also supported the purchase of 3,900 acres of critical wild turkey habitat by partnering \$64,000 with LDWF funds. During the 1980s and 1990s LWTF partnered with LDWF by providing \$278,546 for replacement costs associated with the restocking of 401 wild turkeys.

With 58 local chapters across Louisiana, the LWTF chapter of NWTF continues to be one of Louisiana's most reliable partners supporting habitat enhancement, research, land acquisitions, hunting heritage, turkey restoration, outreach events, and youth, women and physically challenged programs, as well as every-day Louisiana turkey hunters. The following is a partial list of recently funded or planned LWTF funded projects within the state:

- Three habitat projects on the Kisatchie National Forest (KNF) totaling \$10,000.
  - Spring and fall planting on rights-of-way, logging roads and wildlife openings.
  - Funding for a seed spreader is included.
  - Plans are being made with KNF to partner through the Stewardship Contracting Program to fund wildlife habitat work on a larger scale.
- NWTF biologists in cooperation with state and federal agency biologists are working on national wildlife refuges (NWR) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers properties to implement turkey habitat enhancement projects within the upcoming year. These federal lands have been identified by LWTF as areas where partnerships would improve hunter access while helping wild turkeys and other wildlife species.
- On wildlife management areas (WMA) the following projects are planned:
  - Approximately 200 acres of herbicide work is being done to improve brood habitat on Alexander State Forest WMA.
  - Approximately 160 acres is scheduled for prescribed burning on Tangipahoa Parish School Board WMA to improve turkey habitat.
  - Chufa was purchased and planted on about 40 food plots on Ben's Creek WMA.
  - Prescribed burning, wildlife openings and fallow disking is planned on Union WMA to improve brood habitat.
  - About 30 acres of rights-of-way on Jackson-Bienville WMA will be planted in fall clovers and fallow disked to enhance the area for turkey use.
  - Herbicide rehabilitation of approximately 90 acres of overgrown forest on Bodcau WMA is also planned.
  - Other NWTF supported WMA projects will be forthcoming in the later part of the year.

In addition to public lands projects, NWTF provided 9,600 oak seedlings to LWTF members at no cost. The NWTF and LWTF are also partners in the Louisiana Longleaf Pine Restoration Effort. This initiative, which is supported by LDWF, Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Longleaf Alliance, is working to assist private landowners with longleaf pine restoration funding.

With early indications pointing towards improved hatching success in many parts of the state this summer, there is renewed optimism among many turkey hunters. LWTF is proud to have been a strong and successful partner with LDWF over the last 25 years. Being able to sponsor "on the ground" projects distributed across Louisiana's turkey range is key to our 11,000 member strong support. LWTF volunteers and members continue to stand ready to help Louisiana's wild turkey conservation efforts.





NWTF

# LOUISIANA WILD TURKEY REPORT

## POPULATION STATUS

Wild turkeys are distributed across Louisiana, and most suitable habitat is occupied. The highest densities are currently found in the Northwest Loblolly/Shortleaf/Hardwood and Western Longleaf Pine regions (Figure 1).

In the 1980s, “lease hunting” completely replaced “open-land hunting” in the piney woods habitat of the Northwest Loblolly/Shortleaf/Hardwood and Western Longleaf Pine regions. Improved protection along with “second effort” (1980s and 1990s) restocking revitalized these populations (Figure 3). Until recently, turkeys in these regions have exhibited the reproductive characteristics of an expanding population.

Wild turkeys inhabit only a small portion of the North Mississippi Delta and Atchafalaya and Lower Mississippi Delta regions. About 40 percent of the vast bottomland hardwood forest that once blanketed the Mississippi River and associated floodplains in Louisiana has been converted to agricultural land-use, but most acutely in the North Mississippi Delta (*Appendix A*). High-density turkey populations occupy less than 20 percent of these two regions and are only found in the larger forest fragments not subject to prolonged flooding. Currently, a modest expansion of turkey habitat is occurring in these two regions as Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)/Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) forests on marginal farmland are now 10 to 15 years old.

The Southeast Loblolly region supported one of Louisiana’s “original” wild turkey flocks and was once home to 68 percent of Louisiana’s turkey hunters. Like the northwest and western Louisiana pine forest regions, it too saw turkey numbers increase when open lands became leased. However, turkey populations in this region have declined since the early 1990s. Habitat deterioration associated with suburban development and unfavorable forest management practices have impacted turkeys in this region. The loss of prescribed burning, mature timber stands, and hardwoods have reduced habitat quality of this region. This chronic loss of habitat quality intensified in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. A relatively small unit of upland hardwood habitat confined to West Feliciana Parish provides this region with its most stable habitat and highest density turkey population.

## REPRODUCTION

After breeding, nest initiation (egg laying) occurs. The egg laying process usually takes about two weeks followed by a period of incubation. After about 26 to 28 days of incubation, hatching occurs. Excessive rain, cool temperatures, drought, predation, and a host of other disturbances can influence hatching success. A good hatch and poult survival that carries into the fall are keys to sustaining wild turkey numbers. Two or three consecutive poor hatches can result in dramatic regional population declines. Figure 2 identifies critical periods when reproduction can be impacted.

Immediately post-hatch, poults are highly susceptible to predation and adverse weather factors. At about 10 to 14 days they begin to fly short distances. As each week passes, flight and predator evasion skills develop, increasing survival rates. Most standardized poult surveys begin after the majority of poults are old enough to be expected to survive into the fall. From July 1 - Aug. 31 in 2009, 371 observations were recorded and used to determine poult per hen (PPH) ratios (Table 1).

The 2009 Summer Wild Turkey Survey produced the second-lowest statewide production ranking in 16 years of data collection. It indicates a continuation of the recent trend in declining poult production across the state which will likely be re-

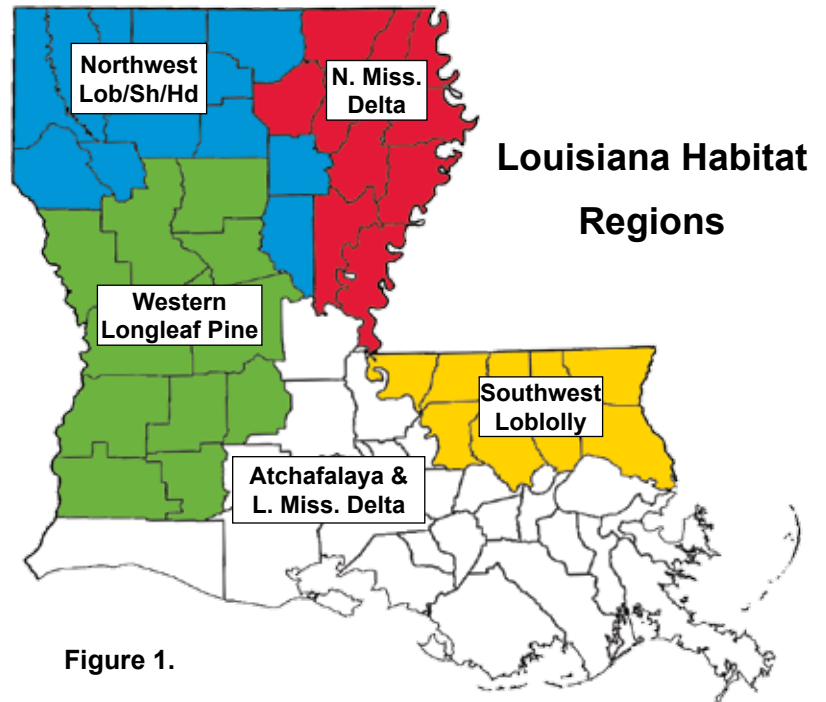


Figure 1.





Recently hatched wild turkey poult.

flected in another less-than-average 2011 adult gobbler harvest. Four of five habitat regions had PPH ratios below their long-term average (*Appendix B*). The Northwest Loblolly/Shortleaf/Hardwood region had its lowest production recorded in 2009 (1.6 PPH). Southeast Loblolly, the region with the lowest long-term average, had fair production and has experienced better than average production for four of the last five years. Western Longleaf, the region with the best long-term average, had good production two of the last four years. Both the North Mississippi Delta and Atchafalaya/Lower Mississippi Delta had improved production from 2008 record lows. However, the North Mississippi Delta region still ranked “poor” and the Atchafalaya/Lower Mississippi Delta only “fair” in 2009. On a statewide basis, five of the lowest production rankings (2004, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009) have occurred in the last six years.

Rainfall during the 2009 nesting season was variable across the state. Low April and May rainfall in the Southeast Loblolly and Atchafalaya/South Mississippi Delta habitat regions provided the best conditions for successful hatches. The other three regions suffered periods of above average rainfall during critical incubating and hatching periods. With the median hatch date of May 19 in Louisiana, higher than normal May rainfall likely was a contributing factor to poor poult production in 2008 and 2009.

Spring flooding is another significant environmental variable impacting poult production in two habitat regions, North Mississippi Delta and Atchafalaya/South Mississippi Delta. Record low 2008 poult production in these regions resulted

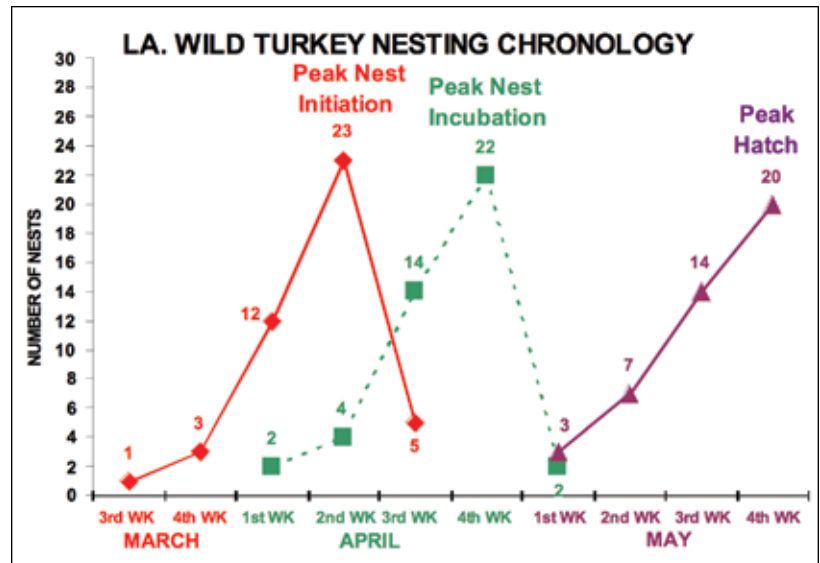


Figure 2. Nest start, incubation and hatch peaks

Habitat Region	# Observations	PPH Ratio	Ranking <sup>1</sup>	1994-2008 PPH Average
W Longleaf Pine	125	2.8	A	3.8
SE Loblolly Pine	91	2.5	A	2.4
Atchafalaya/S Lower Miss. Delta	46	2.3	A B	2.7
N Miss. Delta	40	1.7	B C	3.7
NW Loblolly/Shortleaf/Hardwood	69	1.6	C	3.2

<sup>1</sup> PPH ratios with the same letter are not statistically different ( $P \leq 0.20$ )

Table 1. Poults per hen (PPH) by habitat region, 2009





James C. Davis

from a combination of long-duration spring flooding (in unprotected areas) and above average nesting season rainfall. Again in 2009, river levels were high during nesting season resulting in below average production.

The 2010 Poult Report will be completed in early 2011. Summer weather patterns in much of the state were improved from recent years. Early indications and reports from turkey survey participants appear to point toward improved production in some habitat regions of the state. A special thanks goes out to all who participate in this annual survey.

## RESTORATION

Approximately 3,856 wild turkeys have been released in Louisiana since 1962. Of those, 3,103 were wild-trapped within Louisiana, and 753 were trapped out of state. During the initial restocking period (1960s and 1970s), releases were generally successful in areas with established hunting clubs, better protection and quality habitat. However, a second restocking effort was required (1980s and 1990s) to establish thriving populations in the piney woods of northwest, southwest and a portion of southeast Louisiana, where lease hunting (protection) proved to be the catalyst for success.

Most suitable habitat is now either occupied or has established populations in close proximity. However, LDWF continues to receive and evaluate stocking requests. Most of these restocking requests are for marginal habitat. Small blocks of fragmented forest, sites with established populations nearby, or coastal zone forestland (cypress/tupelo swamps) are typical of recent stocking requests.



James C. Davis

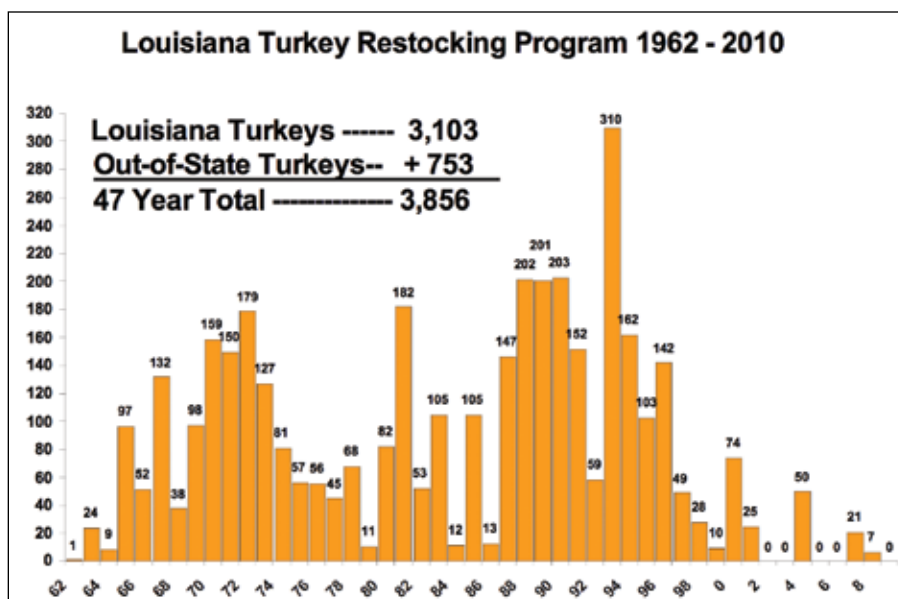


Figure 3. Illustrates turkeys restocked from 1962-2010

Requests to evaluate reforested CRP and WRP farm tracts have increased as these young timber stands advance in age. All sites evaluated the last five years have been dominated by early succession vegetation and will require five to 10 additional years of tree growth to reach the threshold of habitat suitability for turkeys. Many of these sites are large enough to develop into suitable turkey habitat or function as corridors reconnecting fragments of mature hardwood forest. Many of these farm bill projects have been clustered around the Tensas River NWR/Big Lake WMA/Buck Horn WMA habitat complex to benefit the recovery of the threatened Louisiana black bear. This expanded habitat will certainly be re-occupied in due time by the “original” Louisiana wild turkeys that inhabited the Tensas Swamp when President Teddy Roosevelt made his famous bear hunt there 103 years ago.

Most of these reforested tracts with real potential are located less than five to 10 miles from established turkey populations and will repopulate naturally as habitat matures. However, supplemental restocking may be considered in the future to accelerate the reestablishment of turkeys on tracts deemed appropriate. Only one turkey release has been made in the last five years. In 2008, the release of seven hens completed the restocking effort on Camp Minden, a 13,000-acre Louisiana National Guard facility in northwest Louisiana.

## HUNTING SEASONS

Mandatory deer/turkey tagging regulations enacted for the 2007-2008 hunting seasons were modified to be voluntary due to failure of the contractor to deliver verifiable tags. In the fall of 2008 and the spring of 2009, mandatory deer and turkey tagging were once again implemented and enforced.

Louisiana has had a uniform statewide opening date of the fourth Saturday in March in recent years. In response to public input, the opening date for 2010 was shifted earlier to the Saturday closest to March 22. The basic season structure was retained, including a uniform statewide opening date and three season length options based on relative turkey population density: 30 days; 23 days; and 16 days. The majority of the state has a 30-day season. The figure below provides information regarding the timing of wild turkey breeding activity in Louisiana. This information is considered when determining season dates. The gobbling data is based on eight years of data (1999-2006) comprising nearly 5,000 observations from LDWF’s gobbling activity survey and from research conducted in the southeastern U.S. *In Figure 4, the gobbling trend lines stop around March 24 because that is when the survey ends, not because gobbling activity stops.* In the absence of hunting, gobbling would be expected to increase until peak breeding, drop or level somewhat, then post-peak, increase beyond pre-breeding levels. The gobbling peaks in Figure 4 are the approximate periods when sustained high levels of gobbling are expected. Depending on



Jimmy Stafford

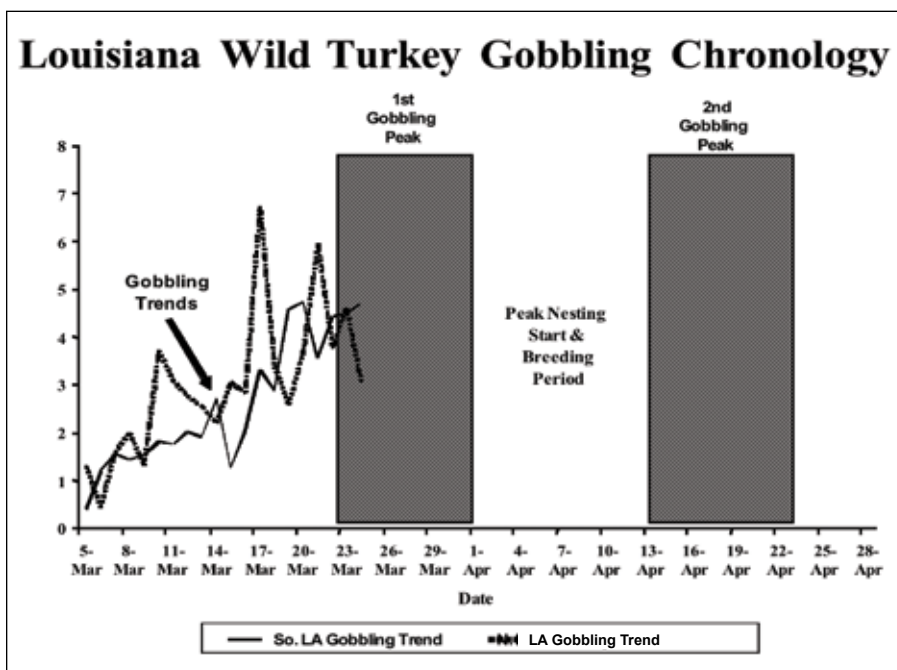


Figure 4. Gobbling activity



weather and other factors, increased gobbling periods can occur before, between and after the peaks illustrated in *Figure 4*. The peak nesting start was derived from several research projects conducted in Louisiana and from incidental nest contacts recorded over many years.

Youth turkey seasons have been held on selected WMAs since 2002. In 2004, a statewide private lands youth hunt was established to coincide with WMA youth hunts occurring the weekend prior to the regular turkey season. Participation in this early-hunt was expanded in 2006 to include physically challenged hunters with wheelchair classification permits.

## STATEWIDE HARVEST

Harvest data for the spring turkey season has been generated since 1980 using a standard mail survey. Questionnaires are sent to a random sample (6 percent) of basic license holders in March and April. Data for the 2010 season will be available July 2011. Game survey estimates indicate the annual harvest for the five years (2005-2009) has averaged about 8,400 gobblers (*Figure 5*).

Mandatory harvest validation (via phone or internet) was instituted in 2009 to provide a real-time estimate of the harvest along with other data. Hunters using the new system validated 2,586 gobblers in 2009 and 2,221 gobblers in 2010 (*Table 2*). Reported harvest totals for 2009 and 2010 have been compiled by parish (*Appendix E and F*). In 2010 hunters reported harvesting 78 percent on private lands and 22 percent on public lands. Jakes comprised 16 percent of the statewide reported gobbler harvest. The direct recovery rate (harvest rate the first season after capture) for 315 jakes banded statewide from 2000 to 2010 was less than 10 percent (30/315) indicating a low jake harvest rate.

*Appendix D* illustrates the 2009 and 2010 harvest dates as reported by hunters. Hunters are allotted up to 72 hours to report their harvested turkey which resulted in a slight lag period on the graph between the actual harvest and the date reported. The two-day youth season started on March 21 in 2009 and on March 13 in 2010. The regular season started on March 28 in 2009 and on March 20 in 2010.

In 2010 LDWF enforcement agents recorded almost 1,500 turkey hunter checks (*Table 3*). They documented three primary non-compliance issues: hunters not in possession of valid turkey tags while hunting; missing tags not validated; and harvested turkeys not properly tagged. Most of the hunters (96 percent) were in compliance when checked by agents. Of the 4 percent of the hunters not in compliance, youth hunters comprised the largest proportion in 2010. In 2009, lifetime license holders made up the highest proportion of non-compliant hunters. Compliance with the tagging aspect of the regulation improved in 2010 from the previous year. About 9 percent of the turkeys checked had not been properly tagged in 2010 compared to 29 percent in 2009. In comparison, WMA hunters are required to record all harvests as well as check in and out daily using WMA self-clearing permits (SCP). In 2009 a total of 288 turkeys were reported through SCPs, and 261 (91 percent) of this harvest were captured via the tagging validation (reporting by phone or internet) process. In 2010 the WMA SCP harvest was 254; however, only 197 (78 percent) were "validated." Private lands tag validation rates remain unknown

and are believed to be considerably lower than WMA rates. The hunter-reported harvest for both years is well below mail survey estimates. LDWF continues to emphasize to hunters that reporting all turkeys harvested is of the utmost importance for the proper management of this highly sought after wildlife resource.



Jimmy Stafford



Land Use	Adults		Jakes		Total	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
Private Land Harvest	1,830 (88%)	1,470 (85%)	257 (12%)	264 (15%)	2,087 (81%)	1,734 (78%)
Public Land Harvest	433 (87%)	406 (83%)	66 (13%)	81 (17%)	496 (91%)	487 (22%)
Total Harvest	2,263 (88%)	1,876 (84%)	323 (12%)	345 (16%)	2,586	2,221

Table 2. Hunter reported harvest data, 2009 & 2010

TURKEY TAGGING COMPLIANCE CHECK								
Year	# Hunters Checked	Harvested Gobblers Properly Tagged	Harvested Gobblers Not Tagged	Non-Compliance Issues by License Type				
				Youth	Lifetime	Senior	Sportsman	Other
2009	1,894	37	15 (29%)	7	15	2	1	9
2010	1,489	124	12 (9%)	13	9	9	6	8

Table 3. Number of turkey hunters checked and compliance

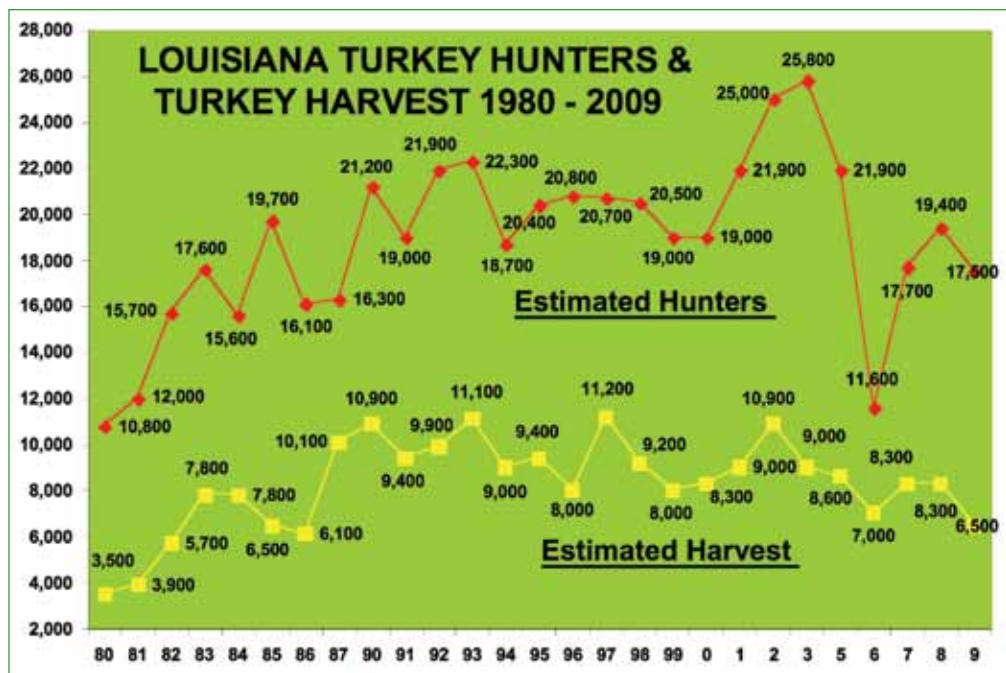


Figure 5. Illustrates mail survey estimated statewide turkey harvests and hunters



Luke Lewis





# WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS



## TURKEY HUNTING ON WMAs

Louisiana's Wildlife Management Area (WMA) system includes lands that are department-owned, free-lease industrial timber company, and privately owned tracts, as well as areas owned by local, state and federal government agencies. Twenty-nine WMAs (600,000+ acres) were open for public turkey hunting in 2010. Harvest data are collected by self-clearing check stations and represent minimum numbers. WMAs varied in size from 128 acres to 105,000+ acres and have seasons that ranged from very conservative (one-day lottery youth-only) to liberal (30-day daily self-clearing permit).

Turkey populations range from low to high density depending on habitat quality. As an example, Dewey Wills WMA is a 60,276 acre bottomland hardwood tract subject to frequent spring backwater which has sustained a low-density turkey population for 30 years. A four-day lottery hunt is held in late-spring to provide a small group of hunters with some quality recreation. Fort Polk is a 105,000-acre WMA that supports a high-density flock and a liberal 30-day season. However, intensive military training in certain years can severely restrict public access during turkey season.

Statewide, WMA harvest was again below average in 2010. Hunter efforts were down from 2009 but above the five-year average (*Table 4*). Below average turkey recruitment during four out of the last five years may be an important factor contributing to this decline in hunter success on public land.

WMA Harvest	Acres	Efforts	Kill	Efforts/Kill	Acres/Kill
<b>5-year Average</b>	691,527	6,648	340	27	2,034
<b>2010</b>	<b>691, 527</b>	<b>7,751</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>2,723</b>

Table 4. Louisiana 2010 WMA Harvest Totals



Jimmy Stafford

Through cooperative agreements several utility rights-of-way located on WMAs are managed for turkeys.

## WMA HARVEST HISTORIES



### **BAYOU MACON** (6,940 acres - owner: LDWF)

Bayou Macon WMA is located in the northeast Mississippi Delta. Topography on this property is flat with relatively poor drainage. Two intermittent streams, Brushy and Buck bayous, are located on the area. Almost 1,500 acres of reclaimed agricultural fields have been reforested with hardwoods. Turkeys were stocked on the WMA in 1993 with birds trapped by LDWF personnel on Lookout Point (East Carroll Parish) and Sicily Island Hills WMA. Forest management practices on this bottomland hardwood site have been directed toward increasing the production of quality mast-bearing species as well as improving understory composition. Eleven forest openings totaling 45 acres have been created and maintained as brood rearing habitat. Susceptibility to shallow water flooding and the relatively small size of the WMA limit turkey numbers.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
BAYOU MACON	2010	2	10	4	2.5	6,919	1,730	lottery
	2009	2	9	2	4.5	6,919	3,459	lottery
	2008	2	13	2	6.5	6,919	3,459	lottery
	2007	2	12	4	3	6,919	1,730	lottery
	2006	2	12	1	12	6,919	6,919	lottery
	2005	2	13	4	3.3	6,919	1,730	lottery
	2004	2	9	2	2.3	6,919	3,460	lottery
	2003	2	8	3	2.6	6,919	2,306	lottery
	2002	2	9	2	4.5	6,919	3,459	lottery
	2001	2	13	1	13	6,919	6,919	lottery
	2000	2	14	1	14	6,919	6,919	lottery



### **BEN'S CREEK** (13,044 acres - owner: Weyerhaeuser Co.)

Ben's Creek WMA is located in the rolling hills of eastern Washington Parish. The area is an intensively managed loblolly pine forest harvested by thinning and clear cuts. Several small streams traverse the WMA, but hardwood areas are limited. During the 1980s and 1990s much of the area was composed of more mature forest and prescribed burning was regularly performed. In recent years much of the area has been harvested and now is in very young pine plantations. This, combined with a loss of prescribed fire, has decreased the area's quality for wild turkeys. To help offset habitat deficiencies, many small food plots are planted on the area each year. Ben's

Creek has been the site of one of the south's largest wild turkey gobbler studies. Information collected during this 20-year study has helped biologists better understand harvest management strategies.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
BEN'S CREEK	2010	17	254	4	64	13,044	3,261	open
	2009	17	401	14	29	13,044	932	open
	2008	17	323	6	53.8	13,044	2,174	open
	2007	16	245	5	49	13,044	2,609	open
	2006	16	271	5	54.2	13,044	2,609	open
	2005	24	640	13	49.2	13,044	1,003	open
	2004	23	576	14	41.1	13,113	937	open
	2003	23	837	12	69.7	13,113	1,092	open
	2002	23	924	23	40.2	13,113	570	open
	2001	23	855	15	57	13,113	874	open
	2000	23	1,360	25	54	13,856	554	open



## BIG LAKE (19,231 acres - owner: LDWF)

Big Lake WMA is a bottomland hardwood tract located in Franklin, Madison and Tensas parishes of northeastern Louisiana. The eastern boundary of this area borders the Tensas River NWR, and together these areas form one of the largest remaining tracts of bottomland hardwood forests that historically composed the lower Mississippi River floodplain. The turkeys present originated from native flocks, but population numbers have not been extremely high since acquisition by LDWF. However, the population has been sufficient enough to conduct a limited annual spring hunt with a 17-day season being offered for the last several years. The majority

of this area consists of older growth bottomland hardwoods and many small openings that are managed specifically for turkeys. This area is susceptible to flooding from the Tensas River which can be detrimental to nesting success some years.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
BIG LAKE	2010	17	762	21	36.3	19,231	916	open
	2009	17	909	27	33.6	19,231	712	open
	2008	17	807	42	21	19,231	458	open
	2007	16	845	58	16.5	19,231	331	open
	2006	9	749	36	27.8	19,231	534	open
	2005	10	794	38	20.9	19,231	506	open
	2004	9	923	44	21	19,231	437	open
	2003	9	644	53	29.7	19,231	362	open
	2002	9	404	21	19.2	19,231	874	open
	2001	9	480	17	28.2	19,231	1,131	open
	2000	9	567	19	29.8	19,231	1,012	open



## BODCAU (33,766 acres - owner: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)

Bodcau WMA is located northwest of Minden in Bossier and Webster parishes. The property's primary purpose is to control floodwater that could severely impact highly developed portions of Bossier Parish. The area contains a wide range of wildlife habitat, ranging from cypress swamps to upland pine and hardwood forests interspersed with grasslands and open fields. Ongoing habitat management and development on the WMA include prescribed burning, fallow disking, supplemental food plantings, and timber harvest. Due to this area's primary purpose of flood control, it is subject to highly fluctuating water levels which often occur during the spring

and early summer. This, along with other factors, can produce problems during the turkey nesting season. As a result turkey populations on Bodcau WMA often cycle accordingly depending on the amount and duration of flood events.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
BODCAU	2010	16	320	8	40	34,355	4,294	open
	2009	16	512	13	39.4	34,355	2,643	open
	2008	17	412	9	45.8	34,355	3,817	open
	2007	16	409	11	37.2	34,355	3,123	open
	2006	16	344	16	21.5	34,355	2,147	open
	2005	17	452	9	50.2	34,355	3,817	open
	2004	16	435	17	25.6	34,355	2,021	open
	2003	16	451	16	28.1	34,355	2,147	open
	2002	16	423	15	28.2	34,355	2,290	open
	2001	16	427	17	25.1	34,355	2,021	50% flooded
	2000	16	824	32	25.8	34,355	1,074	tornado damage





### BOEUF (50,967 acres - owner: LDWF)

Boeuf WMA is a bottomland hardwood tract located in southeastern Caldwell Parish and the northern portion of Catahoula Parish. Turkeys on this area originated from restocking efforts by LDWF. The first release made in the late 1940s consisted of pen-raised birds and was considered unsuccessful. Another release in 1983 of wild-trapped birds is responsible for present-day flocks. Approximately 10 percent of Boeuf's total acreage is considered suitable turkey habitat with the rest being too low, flat and subject to flooding for substantial turkey production. A huntable population is maintained with a nine-day spring season being offered annually. Proper forest

management practices and maintenance of openings and interior pipeline rights-of-way aid in sustaining the turkey population of this area.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
BOEUF	2010	9	34	2	17	50,967	25,487	open
	2009	9	115	14	8.2	50,967	3,641	open
	2008	10	155	12	12.9	50,967	4,247	open
	2007	9	152	14	9.6	50,967	3,641	open
	2006	9	67	4	6.3	50,967	12,741	open
	2005	10	17	1	17	50,967	50,967	open
	2004	9	27	1	27	50,947	50,967	open
	2003	9	47	2	23.5	50,974	25,487	open
	2002	9	30	2	15	50,974	25,487	open
	2001	9	9	0	0	50,656	0	high water
	2000	9	42	2	21	47,850	23,925	open



### CAMP BEAUREGARD (12,500 acres - owner: Louisiana National Guard)

Camp Beauregard WMA is primarily located in northeast Rapides Parish with some acreage in southeast Grant Parish. Timber on the WMA is managed for commercial production. The terrain is characterized by gently rolling hills in the upland areas. The upland overstory is dominated by pine plantations with scattered hardwoods in the hills. The Flagon Creek bottom is a frequently flooded hardwood area of about 800 acres and is a typical bottomland forest with cypress, over cup oak and bitter pecan as the dominant overstory species. Habitat management activities include timber harvests, prescribed burns, and maintaining openings. This area provides good

turkey habitat and a generally stable population. As a military base, hunting opportunity is subject to closure for training exercises.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
CAMP BEAUREGARD	2010	9	43	1	43	12,500	12,500	open
	2009	9	113	3	37.7	12,500	4,167	open
	2008	10	112	2	56	12,500	6,250	open
	2007	9	56	0	0	12,500	0	open
	2006	16	119	2	59.5	12,500	6,250	open
	2005	17	184	5	36.8	12,500	2,500	open
	2004	Area closed due to military activity.						
	2003	16	109	10	10.9	12,500	1,250	open
	2002	16	241	7	34.4	12,500	1,785	open
	2001	16		6		12,500	2,083	open
	2000	16		8		12,500	1,563	open



## CLEAR CREEK (55,672 acres - owner: Forest Capital LLC.)

Clear Creek WMA is located in the rolling hills of western Louisiana in Vernon Parish. The forest consists of loblolly / slash pine plantation with creek bottoms transecting throughout the area. Soils are generally low in fertility with acidic characteristics commonly found in upland pine habitats; however, creek bottom areas are more fertile. The terrain has low rolling hills that undulate into draws of hardwood creek bottoms. The landowner manages the timber resource on a 30-year rotation, producing a constant supply of pulpwood for their mills. Harvested acreage is site prepped and "savanna rowed" before replanting. Turkey populations flourish on this

area due to the abundance of quality nesting habitat accompanied with adequate forage sources from insects to hardwood mast.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
CLEAR CREEK (Boise Vernon)	2010	26	791	27	29.3	55,672	2,062	open
	2009	25	891	26	34.3	55,672	2,141	open
	2008	26	847	29	29.2	55,672	1,920	open
	2007	25	636	12	53	55,672	4,639	open
	2006	21	725	23	31.5	55,672	2,421	open
	2005	21	872	35	24.9	55,672	1,591	open
	2004	25	651	23	28.7	55,672	2,420	open
	2003	18	538	13	41.3	55,672	4,282	open
	2002	23	952	16	59.5	55,672	3,479	open
	2001	23	674	19	35	55,672	2,930	open
	2000	23		3		55,672		open



## DEWEY WILLS (63,401 acres - owner: LDWF)

Dewey Wills WMA is primarily located in the southern portion of La Salle Parish with a small portion in Catahoula Parish. Dewey Wills WMA was purchased by LDWF in 1964, and is the largest forested bottomland tract owned by the department. The majority of the area is an overflow swamp habitat that serves as a backwater basin to the Black River and Red River drainage systems. The area is flat, poorly drained land that is subject to annual overflow. It is interlaced with a large number of bayous and lakes. The forest cover is a mixture of bottomland hardwoods. Considerable changes in the form of levee systems, canals, and lock and dams have altered the drainage patterns, but the WMA remains a flood basin albeit with vastly different

water regimes. The timber was harvested prior to LDWF ownership, creating an open canopy, and the removal of livestock competition was all that was necessary to stimulate understory production. The forested canopy began closing across the property in the 1980s, and the resultant scattered open understory provided good turkey habitat. Forest management activities in the 1980s and 1990s began to improve habitat conditions in treated areas. In the early 2000s, "oak decline" on the area, a mortality of oaks due to compounding variables, resulted in extensive die-off of the forest canopy oaks (prolonged drought 1999-2001; overstocked stands; history of beaver flooding stress; insects; diseases; etc.). Due to changes in hydrology on the area, the predominant timber type in many portions is changing from overcup oak, bitter pecan and nuttall oak, to willow oak. In the next couple of decades, willow oak should close the canopy in many areas, reducing understory vegetation density and providing scattered beneficial habitat for turkeys.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
DEWEY WILLS	2010	4	13	2	6.5	60,276	30,138	lottery
	2009	4	9	2	4.5	60,276	30,138	lottery
	2008	2	2	1	2	60,276	60,276	lottery
	2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 Area Closed							
	2002	4	13	1	13	60,276	60,276	lottery
	2001	Area Closed						
	2000	4		1		60,276	60,276	lottery



## FORT POLK (105,545 acres - owners: U.S. Army & U.S. Forest Service)

Fort Polk WMA is located in central Vernon Parish. The acreage owned by the U.S. Forest Service has mature longleaf pine on rolling hills with bottomland hardwoods draining the upland sandy soil habitat. Prescribed burning generally occurs on a one-to-three-year cycle. The acreage owned by the U.S. Army is comprised of uneven aged pine/hardwood habitat with savannahs present on the western section. Fort Polk is a very important red cockaded woodpecker research area. Soils are generally low in fertility with acidic characteristics commonly found in

upland pine habitats; however, creek bottom areas are more fertile. Frequent prescribed burns yield excellent turkey habitat and thus moderate to high densities are observed.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
FORT POLK	2010	30	1,100	35	31.4	105,545	3,016	open
	2009	30	1,299	19	68.4	105,545	5,555	military closure
	2008	31	295	16	18.4	105,545	6,597	military closure
	2007	30	1,028	34	30.2	105,545	3,104	military closure
	2006	30	535	31	17.2	105,545	3,404	military closure
	2005	31	380	5	76	105,545	21,109	military closure
	2004	30	311	31	10	105,545	3,405	military closure
	2003	30	1,131	43	26.3	105,545	2,454	open
	2002	30	1,073	32	33.5	105,545	3,298	open
	2001	30	682	7	97.4	105,545	15,078	open
	2000	30	1,327	43	30.9	105,545	2,454	open



## GRASSY LAKE (12,983 acres - owner: LDWF)

Grassy Lake WMA is located in northeastern Avoyelles Parish bordered by the Red River. The area consists of bottomland hardwood on fertile Red River floodplain soils. The site provides good turkey habitat but is subject to spring flooding. Depending on the duration of these floods, annual turkey production can be impacted. Like other flood prone areas, harvest rates fluctuate with production.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
GRASSY LAKE	2010	9	117	6	19.5	12,983	2,164	open
	2009	9	258	8	32.3	12,983	1,623	open
	2008	17	385	17	22.6	12,983	764	open
	2007	16	256	26	10	12,983	499	open
	2006	16	201	17	11.8	12,983	764	open
	2005	17	80	11	7	12,983	1,180	open
	2004	16	190	11	17.3	12,983	1,180	open
	2003	9	129	5	25.8	12,983	2,596	open
	2002	9	354	5	70.8	12,983	2,596	open
	2001	9	212	4	30.3	12,983	3,246	open
	2000	9	229	7	32.7	12,983	1,855	open





### JACKSON-BIENVILLE (32,185 acres - owner: Weyerhaeuser Co.)

Jackson Bienville WMA is located in the rolling hills southwest of Ruston. The property is managed primarily for pine timber. The Dugdemona River and several small streams traverse the WMA offering good habitat for turkeys. A portion of the WMA's pine forests are managed in older trees to benefit the endangered red cockaded woodpecker (RCW). Longer timber rotations and prescribed burning used in RCW management also benefits turkeys. Other portions of the WMA are managed actively using thinnings and shorter final harvest rotations. Seasons, hunter efforts and harvests have been relatively consistent.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
JACKSON-BIENVILLE	2010	16	460	23	20	32,185	1,399	open
	2009	16	551	18	30.6	32,185	1,788	open
	2008	17	590	30	19.7	32,185	1,072	open
	2007	16	622	38	16.4	32,185	847	open
	2006	16	624	50	12.5	32,185	644	open
	2005	17	552	29	19	32,185	1,110	open
	2004	16	431	23	18.7	32,185	1,399	open
	2003	16	594	14	42.4	32,185	2,298	open
	2002	16	671	30	22.4	32,185	1,072	open
	2001	16	554	25	25.6	32,185	1,287	open
	2000	16	537	21	25.6	32,185	1,533	open



### LAKE RAMSAY SAVANNAH (796 acres - owner: LDWF)

Lake Ramsay Savannah WMA is located in St. Tammany Parish just northwest of Covington. The habitat is longleaf pine savannah characterized by flat terrain and wet soils. Most of the area is composed of open grassland managed by fire. Heavy post-Hurricane Katrina urban development on surrounding lands has greatly limited the area's value to turkeys.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
LAKE RAMSAY	2010	16	3	0	0	796	0	open
	2009	16	6	0	0	796	0	open
	2008	17	10	0	0	796	0	open
	2007	16	4	0	0	796	0	open
	2006	16	13	0	0	796	0	open



## LITTLE RIVER (4,164 acres - owner: LDWF)

Little River WMA, located in Grant Parish, consists of LDWF-owned lands and a tract provided by RMS Company. The area is comprised of a variety of habitat types from bottomland hardwoods to intensively managed upland pine. The area supports a population of turkeys that provides for a limited season each year.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
LITTLE RIVER	2010	16	26	3	8.6	4,727	1,575	open
	2009	16	18	2	9	4,727	2,364	open
	2008	16	23	0	0	4,727	0	open
	2007	16	22	1	22	4,727	4,727	open
	2006	16	39	0	N/A	4,727	N/A	open
	2005	17	37	3	12.3	4,727	1,576	open
	2004	16	21	2	10.5	4,727	2,377	open
	2003	16	30	3	10	4,164	1,388	open
	2002	16	21	3	7	3,840	1,280	open
	2001	16		0	0	3,840	0	severe flooding
	2000	16	16	1	16	3,277	3,277	open



## LOGGY BAYOU

(6,381 acres - owners: LDWF, La. State Lands Office & U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)

Loggy Bayou WMA is located in the southern most part of Bossier Parish. The WMA lies between Loggy and Red Chute bayous and Lake Bistineau in the Red River Alluvial Valley of northwestern Louisiana. The terrain is flat with approximately 90 percent of the area being subject to annual flooding from backwaters of the Red River. The majority of the area is low quality forest. Habitat management activities involve manipulation of the available openings through mowing, fallow disking and supplemental plantings. Being a highly flood-prone area, turkey

nesting success, and in turn total population, is limited due to flood events during nesting season. Despite its flood-prone nature, Loggy Bayou WMA still manages to support a small turkey population and provide limited hunting opportunity through both youth and adult lottery turkey hunts.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
LOGGY BAYOU	2010	3	8	1	8	6,381	6,381	lottery
	2009	3	14	0	0	6,381	0	lottery
	2008	3	4	1	4	6,381	6,381	lottery
	2007	3	13	2	6.5	6,381	3,191	lottery
	2006	3	21	1	21	6,381	6,381	1 illegal kill
	2005	3	9	2	4.5	6,381	3,191	lottery
	2004	3	12	3	4	6,381	2,127	lottery
	2003	3	10	1	10	6,597	6,597	lottery
	2002	3	9	2	4.5	6,597	3,298	lottery
	2001	3	5	3	1.7	6,597	2,199	lottery
	2000	4	12	2	6	6,597	3,298	lottery



## PEASON RIDGE (33,010 acres - owners: U.S. Army & U.S. Forest Service)

Peason Ridge WMA is located in the corners of Vernon, Sabine and Natchitoches parishes. The acreage owned by the U.S. Forest Service has mature longleaf pine on rolling hills with bottom-land hardwoods draining the upland sandy soil habitat. Prescribed burning generally occurs on a one-to-three year cycle. The acreage owned by the U.S. Army is comprised of an uneven aged pine/hardwood habitat with savannahs present on the area. Peason Ridge WMA is a very important red cockaded woodpecker research area. Soils are generally low in fertility with acidic characteristics commonly found in upland pine habitats; however, creek bottom areas

are more fertile. Frequent prescribed burns yield excellent turkey habitat and thus moderate to high densities are observed.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
PEASON RIDGE	2010	31	622	24	25.9	33,010	1,375	open
	2009	31	20	1	20		33,010	military closure
	2008	Area Closed due to military activity						
	2007	30	119	15	7.9	33,010	2,201	military closure
	2006	30	144	10	14.4	33,010	3,301	military closure
	2005	31	150	3	50	33,010	11,003	military closure
	2004	30	33	2	16.5	33,010	16,505	open
	2003	30	385	14	27.5	33,010	2,357	open
	2002	30	92	2	46	33,010	16,505	open
	2001	30	148	2	74	33,010	16,505	open
	2000	30	43	0	0	33,010	0	open



## RED RIVER (41,681 acres - owners: LDWF & U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)

### THREE RIVERS (28,124 acres - owners: LDWF, La. State Lands Office & USACE)

Red River and Three Rivers WMAs are located between the Red and Mississippi rivers in southern Concordia Parish. Both are high fertility alluvial flood plains with high productivity potential for turkeys. An active timber management program has been improving turkey habitat conditions. However both WMAs are very susceptible to prolonged spring flooding that in recent years has limited reproductive success.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
RED RIVER/ THREE RIVERS	2010	16	742	24	31	71,725	2,989	open
	2009	16	1,007	47	21.4	71,725	1,526	open
	2008	17	814	78	10.4	71,725	920	open
	2007	16	1,332	87	10.4	71,725	824	open
	2006	9	590	59	7.7	71,725	1,216	open
	2005	10	548	41	13.4	71,725	1,749	open
	2004	9	295	50	5.9	68,771	1,375	open
	2003	9	546	37	14.8	68,771	1,859	open
	2002	9	598	44	13.6	66,213	1,505	open
	2001	9	787	46	17.1	66,213	1,439	open
	2000	9	850	52	16.3	63,300	1,217	open





### **SABINE** (7,554 acres - owner: Forest Capital LLC.)

Sabine WMA is located in central Sabine Parish approximately five miles south of Zwolle. Some smaller tracts on the WMA are provided by other timber companies and private individuals. The terrain varies from rolling hills to creek bottoms. The major timber type is loblolly pine plantations. Habitat management activities include prescribed burning and maintaining openings through mowing. Sabine WMA supports a relatively stable turkey population. To prevent overcrowding and promote quality hunting experiences, turkey hunting opportunities are limited to two weekend lottery hunts.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
SABINE	2010	4	12	2	7	13,706	6,853	lottery
	2009	4	18	3	6	13,706	4,569	lottery
	2008	5	29	3	9.7	13,706	4,569	lottery
	2007	4	23	5	4.6	13,706	2,741	lottery
	2006	4	31	5	6.2	13,706	2,741	lottery
	2005	5	35	2	17.5	13,706	6,853	lottery
	2004	4	31	7	4.4	13,706	1,958	lottery
	2003	4	27	5	5.4	13,706	2,741	lottery
	2002	4	26	2	13	13,706	6,853	lottery
	2001	4	28	1	28	13,706	13,706	lottery
	2000	4	N/A	6	N/A	13,706	N/A	lottery



### **SANDY HOLLOW** (3,696 acres - owner: Tangipahoa Parish School Board)

Sandy Hollow WMA is located in Tangipahoa Parish and is an upland longleaf pine site managed primarily for bobwhite quail and doves. Most of the area is prescribed burned regularly and maintained in an open forest condition preferred by quail. Some small hardwood areas do occur and offer some limited habitat for turkeys. In recent years, habitat changes surrounding much of the WMA have made the area less suitable for turkeys.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
SANDY HOLLOW	2010	16	157	3	52	3,696	1,232	open
	2009	16	105	1	105	3,696	3,515	open
	2008	17	105	2	52.5	3,696	1,758	open
	2007	16	85	2	42.5	3,696	1,758	open
	2006	16	136	1	136	3,696	3,696	open
	2005	24	107	3	35.7	3,696	1,172	open
	2004	23	118	3	39.3	3,696	1,172	open
	2003	23	139	5	27.5	3,696	703	open
	2002	23	127	1	127	3,696	3,515	open
	2001	23	157	4	39.3	3,696	878	open
	2000	23	205	2	102.5	3,696	1,758	open



## SHERBURNE

(53,618 acres - owners: LDWF, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service & U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)

Sherburne WMA Complex is located in the Morganza Floodway system of the Atchafalaya Basin, situated in the lower portion of Pointe Coupee Parish, the upper portions of St. Martin Parish, and Iberville Parish. The Sherburne WMA (LDWF), Atchafalaya National Wildlife Refuge (USFWS), and the USACE lands combine to form a 44,000-acre tract, managed as one unit by LDWF. The area is classified as bottomland hardwoods with four dominant tree species associations: cottonwood-sycamore; oak-gum-hackberry-ash; willow-cypress-ash; and overcup oak-bitter pecan. LDWF has an active timber management plan on their respective acreages,

which provides for excellent nesting and brood rearing habitat for turkeys. The remainder of this complex also has excellent turkey habitat. In 2008, Hurricane Gustav caused the forest canopy to open resulting in thick groundcover and more difficult hunting conditions. Nonetheless, the turkey harvest is considered good and relatively consistent on this WMA.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
SHERBURNE	2010	11	660	34	19	43,618	1,283	lottery/open
	2009	11	753	38	19.8	43,618	1,148	lottery/open
	2008	12	929	78	11.9	43,618	559	lottery/open
	2007	11	591	92	6	43,618	474	lottery/open
	2006	9	574	55	10.4	43,618	793	lottery/open
	2005	9	704	38	18.5	43,618	1,148	lottery/open
	2004	9	745	53	13	43,618	823	lottery/open
	2003	9	581	50	11.4	43,618	872	lottery/open
	2002	9	698	33	21.1	43,618	1,321	lottery/open
	2001	9	1,012	45	22.5	41,000	911	lottery/open
	2000	9	775	54	14.4	42,690	791	lottery/open



## SICILY ISLAND HILLS (7,524 acres - owner: LDWF)

Sicily Island Hills WMA is a mixed pine/upland hardwood tract located in northeastern Catahoula Parish. The turkeys here originated from restocking efforts in 1983. In subsequent years the area's population was the source of other Louisiana restocking efforts. The first turkey hunt was conducted in 1997 consisting of a three-weekend lottery and has since been lengthened to a 17-day lottery. Several small food plots and wildlife openings are currently managed for turkeys on the WMA. The lack of such openings are a limiting factor for the population. Some limited timber harvesting is planned to specifically enhance turkey nesting and brood habitat.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
SICILY ISLAND	2010	17	149	8	18.6	7,504	938	lottery
	2009	17	199	9	22.1	7,504	834	lottery
	2008	17	171	12	14.3	7,504	625	lottery
	2007	17	161	12	13.4	7,504	625	lottery
	2006	9	129	13	9.9	7,504	577	lottery
	2005	10	171	18	9.5	7,504	417	lottery
	2004	9	129	7	18.4	7,544	1,078	lottery
	2003	9	102	21	4.9	7,504	357	lottery
	2002	9	118	9	13.1	7,504	833	lottery
	2001	8	122	8	15.3	7,504	938	lottery
	2000	6	104	13	8	7,504	577	lottery



## TANGIPAHOA PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

(1,643 acres - owner: Tangipahoa Parish School Board)

The Tangipahoa Parish School Board WMA is composed of three separate parcels. Two are in central and one in north Tangipahoa Parish. These small tracts are actively managed longleaf and loblolly pine forests with limited hardwoods. Due to their limited size and diminishing habitat quality on surrounding properties, they offer only marginal turkey habitat.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
TANGIPAHOA SCHOOL BOARD	2010	30	35	1	35	1,643	1,643	open
	2009	30	82	1	82	1,643	1,643	open
	2008	31	93	0	0	1,643	0	open
	2007	30		1		1,643	1,643	open
	2006	30	20	2	10	1,643	822	open



## TUNICA HILLS (5,906 acres - owner: LDWF)

The Tunica Hills WMA is located in the northwestern corner of West Feliciana Parish. The terrain is rugged loess hills containing a variety of hardwood species. This type of terrain does not lend itself to urban sprawl or agriculture and supports one of Louisiana's most viable turkey populations. The WMA has been the site of gobbler harvest mortality and reproduction success camera studies.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
TUNICA HILLS	2010	14	301	14	21.5	5,783	413	lottery/7 open
	2009	14	280	24	12	5,783	241	lottery/7 open
	2008	14	287	20	14	5,783	289	lottery/7 open
	2007	13	257	17	15.1	5,783	340	lottery/7 open
	2006	13	256	15	17	5,783	386	lottery/7 open
	2005	14	215	8	27	5,783	1,928	lottery/7 open
	2004	8	103	11	9.5	5,358	487	lottery
	2003	8	110	11	10	5,358	487	lottery
	2002	8	104	6	17	5,358	893	lottery
	2001	8	82	9	9.1	5,358	595	lottery
	2000	8	83	6	13.8	3,366	871	lottery





## UNION (11,193 acres - Plum Creek Timber Co.)

Union WMA is located just south of the Arkansas state line west of Marion, La. The WMA is actively managed for pine timber production. Much of the WMA is too thick and not optimal for turkeys. A few small streams traverse the WMA and provide some preferred hardwood areas. Lottery-only hunts have been held on the area to offer a limited number of hunters a high quality experience. Additional future turkey management activities are planned for the WMA that should improve conditions for turkeys.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
UNION	2010	3	12	1	6	11,113	5,557	lottery
	2009	3	10	2	5	11,113	5,557	lottery
	2008	3	17	0	0	11,113	0	lottery
	2007	3	13	2	6.5	11,113	5,557	lottery
	2006	3	13	2	6.5	11,113	5,557	lottery
	2005	3	21	1	21	11,193	11,193	lottery
	2004	2	3	1	3	12,852	12,852	lottery
	2003	2	18	4	4.5	12,852	3,213	lottery
	2002	2	22	6	3.6	12,852	2,142	lottery
	2001	2	17	7	2.4	12,852	1,836	lottery
	2000	6	104	13	8	7,504	577	lottery



## WEST BAY

(60,000 acres - owners: Forest Capital LLC., Roy O. Martin & Forest Investment)

West Bay WMA is located in north Allen Parish. This area consists of loblolly / slash pine plantation with creek bottoms transecting throughout the area. Soils are generally low in fertility with acidic characteristics commonly found in upland pine habitats; however, creek bottom areas are more fertile. Landowners manage the timber resource on a 30-year rotation, producing a constant supply of pulpwood for their mills. Harvested acreage is site prepped and "savanna rowed" before replanting. Turkeys utilize West Bay for nesting habitat and migrate into the Ten

Mile Creek and Six Mile Creek bottoms for the fall and winter seasons. Creek bottoms produce excellent mast crops accompanied by large hayfields adjacent to the WMA affording birds an abundant seed / insect source.

WMA	Year	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	Acres	Acres/Bag	Comments
WEST BAY	2010	5	144	6	24	60,000	10,000	lottery
	2009	4	145	11	13.2	60,000	5,455	lottery
	2008	5	150	12	12.5	60,000	5,000	lottery
	2007	4	92	14	6.6	60,000	4,286	lottery
	2006	4	135	11	12.2	60,000	5,455	lottery
	2005	6	135	9	15	60,000	6,667	lottery
	2004	2	86	17	5.1	63,511	3,736	lottery
	2003	2	108	7	15.4	63,511	9,073	lottery
	2002	2	209	14	14.9	63,511	4,536	lottery
	2001	2	56	8	7	63,511	7,939	lottery
	2000	6	104	13	8	7,504	577	lottery

## WMA YOUTH HUNTS

Youth hunters were selected by lottery for 14 WMA hunts in 2010. A guide and parent/guardian accompanied each youth hunter. Local NWTF chapters "adopted" a hunt by supplying local guides and providing a lunch for the hunters. During the 2010 youth hunts, 110 kids harvested eight gobblers (1 gobbler/13.8 efforts). Success rates were down from previous years and may have been influenced by the more severe winter and late spring green-up. Gobblers were often reported to be in larger groups of turkeys and difficult to call. WMA youth hunts continue to be very popular with participants, volunteers and WMA personnel involved.



John Robinette

### 2007 WMA YOUTH TURKEY HUNTS

WMA	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	NWTF Chapter Sponsors
Ben's Creek	1	6	2	3	Southeast Louisiana Longbeards
Big Lake	1	10	1	10	Macon Ridge Gobblers
Fort Polk/KNF	1	20	1	20	Lake Charles Chapter NWTF/West La Graybeards/Whiskey Chitto Longbeards
Jackson-Bienville	1	4	2	2	North Central LA Local Chapter
Loggy Bayou	1	4	0	0	Northwest LA Chapter
Sherburne	2	17	8	2.25	Dindon Farouche/Atchafalaya Limbhangers/Basin Boss Gobblers
Sicily Island	1	9	0	0	Catahoula Strutters
Spring Bayou	1	3	0	0	LDWF/Local NWTF guides
Thistlethwaite	1	5	2	2.5	LDWF/Local NWTF guides
Union	1	5	1	5	Union Long Spurs
West Bay	1	10	3	3.33	Lake Charles Chapter NWTF
<b>Totals</b>		<b>93</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4.7</b>	

### 2008 WMA YOUTH TURKEY HUNTS

WMA	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	NWTF Chapter Sponsors
Ben's Creek	1	6	2	3	Southeast Louisiana Longbeards
Big Lake	1	13	0	0	Macon Ridge Gobblers
Fort Polk/KNF	1	20	3	6.67	Lake Charles Chapter NWTF/West La Graybeards/Whiskey Chitto Longbeards
Jackson-Bienville	1	5	1	5	North Central LA Local Chapter
Loggy Bayou	1	5	0	0	Northwest LA Chapter
Sherburne	2	18	2	9	Dindon Farouche/Atchafalaya Limbhangers/Basin Boss Gobblers
Sicily Island	1	13	0	0	Catahoula Strutters
Spring Bayou	1	4	2	2	LDWF/Local NWTF guides
Thistlethwaite	1	4	0	0	LDWF/Local NWTF guides
Tunica Hills	1	10	0	0	Feliciano Toms Chapter
Union	1	5	0	0	Union Long Spurs
West Bay		10	2	5	Lake Charles Chapter NWTF
<b>Totals</b>		<b>113</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9.4</b>	

2009 WMA YOUTH TURKEY HUNTS					
WMA	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	NWTF Chapter Sponsors
Ben's Creek	1	6	2	3	Southeast Louisiana Longbeards
Big Lake	1	11	1	11	Macon Ridge Gobblers
Clear Creek	1	10	2	5	Lake Charles Chapter
Fort Polk/KNF	1	20	7	2.9	Lake Charles Chapter NWTF/West La Graybeards/Whiskey Chitto Longbeards
Jackson-Bienville	1	5	0	0	North Central LA Local Chapter
Loggy Bayou	1	4	0	0	Northwest LA Chapter
Sherburne	2	20	1	20	Dindon Farouche/Atchafalaya Limbangers/Basin Boss Gobblers
Sicily Island	1	8	2	4	Catahoula Strutters
Spring Bayou	1	5	3	1.7	LDWF/Local NWTF guides
Thistlethwaite	1	5	0	0	LDWF/Local NWTF guides
Tunica Hills	1	10	3	3.3	Felician Toms
Union	1	5	1	5	Union Long Spurs
West Bay	1	10	6	1.7	Lake Charles Chapter NWTF
<b>Totals</b>		<b>119</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>4.3</b>	

2010 WMA YOUTH TURKEY HUNTS					
WMA	Days	Efforts	Bag	Effort/Bag	NWTF Chapter Sponsors
Ben's Creek	1	5	0	0	LDWF/Local NWTF guides
Big Lake	1	10	0	0	Macon Ridge Gobblers
Clear Creek	1	10	0	0	Lake Charles Chapter
Fort Polk/Peason Ridge/KNF	1	20	4	5	Lake Charles Chapter NWTF/West La Graybeards/Whiskey Chitto Longbeards
Grassy Lake	1	3	0	0	
Jackson-Bienville	1	3	0	0	North Central LA Local Chapter
Loggy Bayou	1	4	1	4	Northwest LA Chapter
Sherburne	2	20	1	20	Dindon Farouche/Atchafalaya Limbangers/Basin Boss Gobblers
Sicily Island	1	10	0	0	Catahoula Strutters
Spring Bayou	1	4	0	0	LDWF/Local NWTF guides
Thistlethwaite	1	0	0	0	LDWF/Local NWTF guides
Tunica Hills	1	10	1	10	Felician Toms
Union	1	5	1	5	Union Long Spurs
West Bay	1	10	1	10	Lake Charles Chapter NWTF
<b>Totals</b>		<b>114</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12.7</b>	

## FALL TURKEY SEASON

Louisiana's first fall turkey season in modern times was held Oct. 2-8, 2010 on the Peason Ridge WMA. Peason Ridge WMA is a U.S. Army training base located in the Western Longleaf habitat region where some of the better turkey numbers occur. Often, much of the WMA is closed during the spring season to facilitate military training. In 2009, a fall season was proposed to offset this loss of hunting opportunity. One hundred hunters were selected by lottery and permitted to hunt. Selected hunters could harvest up to one bearded gobbler during the week that would be counted in their 2010-2011 season limit of two. The Peason Ridge WMA fall season recorded 132 hunter efforts and seven gobblers harvested for 19 efforts per turkey. In a continuing effort to monitor annual harvest rates, gobblers will be captured and banded each winter. Unfortunately, only eight adult gobblers were captured during the 2010 winter and three (38 percent) were harvested during the 2010 spring season.





David Moreland

## RESEARCH & MANAGEMENT

## RESEARCH & MANAGEMENT

The most recent research focus has been the ecology of wild turkeys in bottomland hardwood habitat. Dr. Michael Chamberlain (LSU) is the principal investigator directing long-term research on Sherburne WMA located in the Atchafalaya Basin. LDWF, LSU and the National and Louisiana chapters of the Wild Turkey Federation support this project.

Phase 1 of this project highlighted survival and reproductive ecology of wild turkey hens, and provided information on habitat and space use throughout the annual cycle. Results were presented in two papers at the 2005 Southeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA) conference. Phase 2, which investigated gobbler survival and dispersal, was completed by a second graduate student during the fall of 2007 and reported in the 2008 SEAFWA Proceedings. A Ph.D. student evaluating broader issues affecting turkey populations on Sherburne started Phase 3 in June 2007. The project title is "Influences of Landscape Characteristics on Nesting Ecology of Female Wild Turkeys and Behavior of Raccoons." Objectives of this Phase 3 project are as follows:

- **OBJECTIVE 1:** Assess nesting ecology of female wild turkeys, including nest initiation, nest success, causes of nest failure, and poult survival.
- **OBJECTIVE 2:** Describe fine-scale movements of raccoons during reproductive periods of wild turkeys
- **OBJECTIVE 3:** Assess relationships between turkey nesting ecology, raccoon movements/behavior, and landscape features, such as rights-of-way, food plots, and forest structural characteristics.

The winter of 2009-2010 was colder and longer in duration than average. Spring bud break and leaf development were delayed. Based on the last three years of telemetry data, the average incubation start on Sherburne WMA was also delayed.

The Phase 1 hen ecology study conducted from 2001 to 2004 revealed some of the lowest nest initiation rates (33 percent) and largest pre-incubation home ranges documented. This exceptionally low productivity was attributed to poor quality nesting habitat resulting from lack of understory cover and flooding. Management recommendations included forest management practices directed at improving the quality of nesting habitat by reducing overstory canopy cover, thereby increasing the availability of herbaceous ground cover at higher elevations to protect nests from predation and flooding.

The LDWF wildlife forestry staff prepared timber management prescriptions for Sherburne WMA to specifically address turkey habitat management recommendations by opening the forest canopy 30 to 40 percent during scheduled timber harvest. However, hurricanes Katrina and Rita provided strong winds across the area in 2005, and Hurricane Gustav came ashore as a Category 2 storm on Sept. 1, 2008 maintaining tropical storm winds as it passed over

NEST INCUBATION DATES AND NEST FATES OF RADIO-TRACKED HENS (SHERBURNE WMA 2008-2010)				
Year <sup>1</sup>	Nest ID	Incubation Start	Hatch Date	Nest Fate
2008	233	March 30	N/A	Hen killed on nest
	1092	April 2	April 28	Hatched
	1072	April 3	N/A	Abandoned
	853	April 5	N/A	Nest predated
	853Renest 1	May 3	N/A	Nest predated
2009	403	March 23	April 24	Hatched
	1032	March 29	N/A	Abandoned
	1344	March 28	N/A	Nest predated
	1302	March 30	N/A	Abandoned
	1323	April 1	April 28	Hatched
	253	April 1	N/A	Hen killed on nest
	704	April 2	April 29	Hatched
	1252	April 6	May 1	Hatched
	443	April 5	May 3	Hatched
	433	April 7	N/A	Nest predated
	1383	March 28	April 25	Hatched
	1032Renest 1	April 23	N/A	Abandoned
	1302Renest 1	April 28	N/A	Nest predated
	1362	May 9	N/A	Hen killed on nest
	1032 Renest 2	April 21 <sup>2</sup>	May 18	Hatched
2010	403	April 16	May 16	Hatched
	1323	April 21	N/A	Nest predated
	1302	April 24	N/A	Nest predated
	145	April 25	N/A	Nest predated
	765	April 25	N/A	Nest predated
	1092	April 28	N/A	Hen killed on nest

<sup>1</sup> Number of hens tracked each spring: 2008 = 4; 2009 = 17; 2010 = 8

<sup>2</sup> Estimated date

**Table 5. Illustrates the nesting chronology and fate of radio-tracked hens on the Sherburne WMA studied by doctoral research assistant Michael Byrne**



Sherburne WMA. LDWF forestry staff estimated the landscape-scale forest canopy damage from the latter storm to be about 30 percent. Large canopy trees had limb damage and shallow-rooted midstory trees, such as swamp red maple, were largely uprooted. It is believed that nesting cover for hens increased significantly as forest canopy openings stimulated ground-level vegetation in addition to coarse woody debris. Nest initiations in 2008 increased significantly compared to those previously recorded during the 2001-2004 nesting period.

During 2008-2009, 45 raccoons were captured and fitted with radio collars. Focal runs of collared raccoons were conducted during nesting seasons. A total of 31 raccoons were radio tracked. Results indicate that raccoons exhibit specific foraging habits that may influence turkey nesting success. Field work on this phase was completed in 2010 and the final report will be completed in early 2011.

Throughout the Sherburne WMA studies, gobblers, hens and poults have been captured. In addition to the radio-tracked hens, harvest mortality information is monitored on all banded gobblers. In 2010 three gobblers were fitted with GPS type monitoring units to determine their effectiveness in closed canopy habitats. The GPS units performed exceptionally well, providing a wealth of specific location information. Future plans are being made to fit more turkeys with this type of unit.

For the past 50+ years, the focus of LDWF's land acquisition program has been conservation of remnant bottomland hardwood fragments predominantly in the Mississippi River floodplain. LDWF now owns and manages 480,000 acres of this highly productive habitat. Practical management implications derived from Dr. Chamberlain's comprehensive project will be applied to the management of wild turkeys on state-owned habitat, as well as shared with private land managers.



Jimmy Stafford

Gobbler being banded and released where captured for harvest rate studies.

INCUBATION AND HATCHING SUCCESS RATES			
Year	Number of Hens Marked	Percent of Hens Reaching Incubation (n)	Percent of Nests Hatched (n)
2008	4	100 (4)	20 (1/5)
2009	17	70.6 (12)	46.6 (7/15)
2010	8	75 (6)	16.7 (1/6)

Table 6. Incubation and hatching success rates (Sherburne WMA 2008-2010)

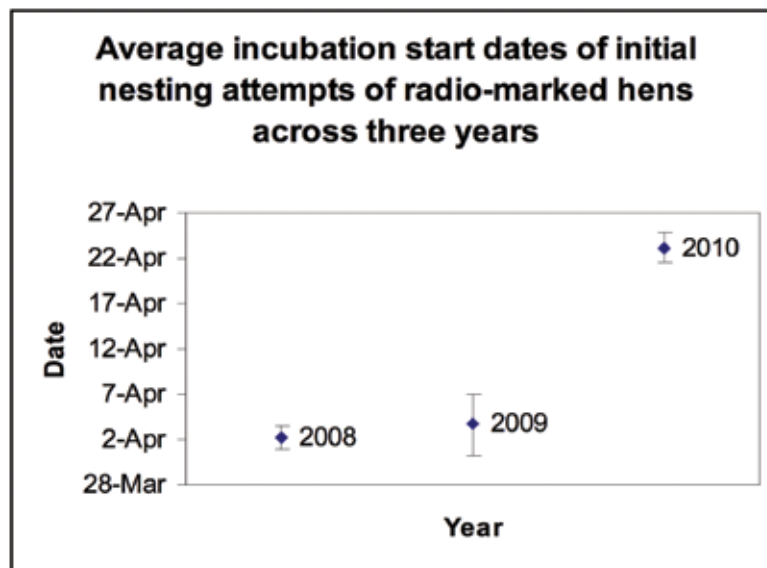


Figure 6. Illustrates the average incubation start

LDWF has conducted long-term banding studies (1000+ gobblers) to monitor gobbler harvest rates since 1989. Gobblers in southeast Louisiana were banded during 1989-1996 and reported harvest was high (70 percent direct recovery for adult gobblers). This region of the state had a declining turkey flock hunted by experienced turkey hunters. During 1999-2001 significant changes in season length (37 days to 30 days), timing (one week later) and bag limit (three to two) were implemented. The proportion of older gobblers in the population increased in response to these changes as indicated by a follow up banding period from 2001 to 2006. Direct recovery declined for adults (70 to 39 percent), jakes (23 to 7 percent) and total gob-



blers (38 to 24 percent) (*Appendix C*). Studies across the nation have demonstrated the importance of allowing a significant portion of the adult gobbler population to survive each season to buffer bad hatch years, increase the percentage of quality (older) gobblers, and insure plenty of gobbling each spring.

Private-land banding studies were initiated in north central Louisiana in 2001. This region of the state had recently been restocked (for the second time), had a conservative 16-day season, and contained a pool of largely novice turkey hunters. The short season was set for a harvest level that would allow continued population expansion. Direct recovery rate for 191 gobblers banded from 2001-2003 was a relatively low 12 percent.

The 16-day season in north Louisiana parishes was expanded to the more liberal 30-day season of Area A in 2007. From 2007 to 2009, 175 gobblers were banded in the piney woods of northern and western Louisiana. The direct recovery for all gobblers during this three-year period was 19 percent.

Kisatchie National Forest, at 600,000 acres, is one of Louisiana's premier public turkey hunting areas. Harvest rate studies will be conducted here for the next five years to monitor hunting pressure and harvest levels. Unfortunately, capture attempts in 2010 were unsuccessful.



NWTF



# LOUISIANA WILD TURKEY RECORDS

## LOUISIANA WILD TURKEY RECORDS

The LDWF started the Louisiana Trophy Recognition Program to document exceptional deer and turkeys harvested within the state. Spur sizes were selected as the primary “trophy” indicator to be measured for wild turkeys in this recognition program. To best capture overall spur quality, both lengths and widths are measured in millimeters for each spur then averaged. The minimum average score recognized is 40 millimeters. Spurs approximately 1.5 inches or longer can reach this minimum. To reach the top tier score of 50, spurs need to average about 1.5 inches in length. The following lists contain the top scoring turkeys reported to the La. Trophy Recognition Program and the NWTF. Note that only turkeys that have been reported and officially certified are listed.



Jimmy Stafford

TOP SCORING WEIGHT (NWTF)			
Weight (pounds)	Parish of Harvest	Hunter	Year
25.25	Pointe Coupee	Allement Russell	1988
25.23	Iberville	Brooks Firmin	2009
23.06	Winn	Barry Dupuis	2005
22.25	Rapides	Mike Bailey	1975
22	East Feliciana	Richard J. Caro	1991
22	Winn	Jon Dale Stephens	2000
21.94	Bienville	John Kevin Brocato	2004
21.81	Bossier	Richard D. Walker	2009
21.75	Lincoln	Dustin Brister	2006 (atypical)
21.69	Beauregard	Jeremy Roberts	2005
21.63	Vernon	Shane Johnson	2004
21.63	Beauregard	Dean Pinder	2008

TOP SCORING SPURS (LDWF)			
Score	Parish of Harvest	Hunter	Year
54.5	Bienville	Ethan Culver	2005
53.87	Winn	Donnie Lasyone	2008
53	Vernon	Duane Watson	2002
52.6	Washington	Karl Casanova	2002
52	Vernon (Fort Polk WMA)	Charles W. Caraway	1982
52	Rapides	Brody Parker	2002
52	Washington	David Schroeder	2006
51.5	Lincoln	Chris Moran	2001
51	Union	Chuck Smith	2003
50.7	Livingston	Ronnie Daniels	1989
50.5	Iberville	John Chaney	2001
50.5	East Baton Rouge	Blake Stott	2007
50	Rapides	Jason DeWitt	1991
50	Bienville	Matt Cheatwood	2006
*65.75 (non-typical)	West Feliciana	Jason Lipoma	2004



## TOP SCORING BEARD (NWTF)

Length (inches)	Parish of Harvest	Hunter	Year
14.5	East Feliciana	Rodney Gremillion	1999
14.5	Union	Aris W. Hargraves	1993
14	Union	Ivo Long	2010
13.5	Rapides	Mike Bailey	1975
11.75	Morehouse	Vance Griffis	2002
11.75	Beauregard	Jeremy Roberts	2005
11.5	Lincoln	Dustin Brister	2006 (atypical)
11.5	Iberville	Brandon Garrison	2005
11.5	Grant	Danny Moreau	1983
11.5	Bossier	Richard D. Walker	2009
11.31	East Feliciana	Wendy Carpenter	2008 (atypical)
11.13	St. Martin	James R. Courville	1999
11	St. Martin	Robert P. Courville	1999
11	Pointe Coupee	Allement Russell	1988
11	Winn	Jon Dale Stephens	2000
11	St. Helena	Richard Ryan Wascom	1996
10.75	East Feliciana	Joseph Cagnolatti	2000
10.75	Vernon	Shane Johnson	2004
10.75	Beauregard	Jeremy Roberts	2004
10.75	Beauregard	Jeremy Roberts	2005
10.63	Winn	Barry Dupuis	2005



Jason Lipoma

**This multi-spurred turkey harvested by Jason Lipoma in 2004 became the first LA Records Program “non-typical” spur entry.**

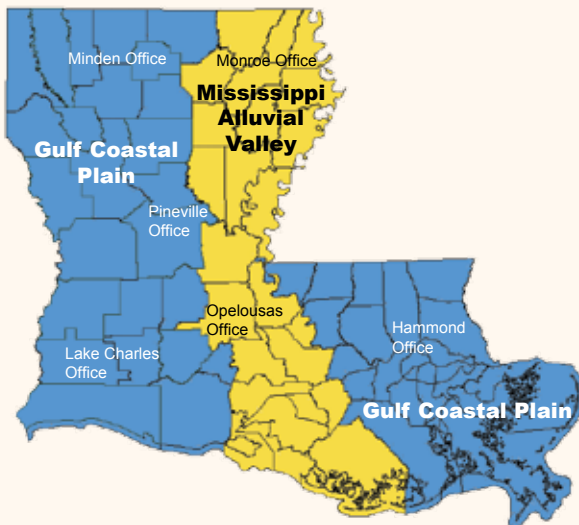


## CONCLUSION

We hope that the information contained within this report has been insightful. Much of the data is the culmination of years of information collected by program leaders and biologists. These data document the often dynamic swings in wild turkey numbers. Such swings are caused by many factors that warrant constant monitoring. LDWF extends its utmost gratitude to the many department staff, survey volunteers and turkey hunters that submit accurate biological information. It is hoped that hunters never downplay the importance of simply validating a harvested gobbler.

The LDWF Wild Turkey Program Leader and biologists are always available to assist those interested in wild turkey management. The Louisiana Wild Turkey Report and other turkey program information can be found on the LDWF website: [www.wlf.louisiana.gov](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov). For more information contact [jstafford@wlf.la.gov](mailto:jstafford@wlf.la.gov) or your local biologist at the number listed below.

### LDWF FIELD OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION



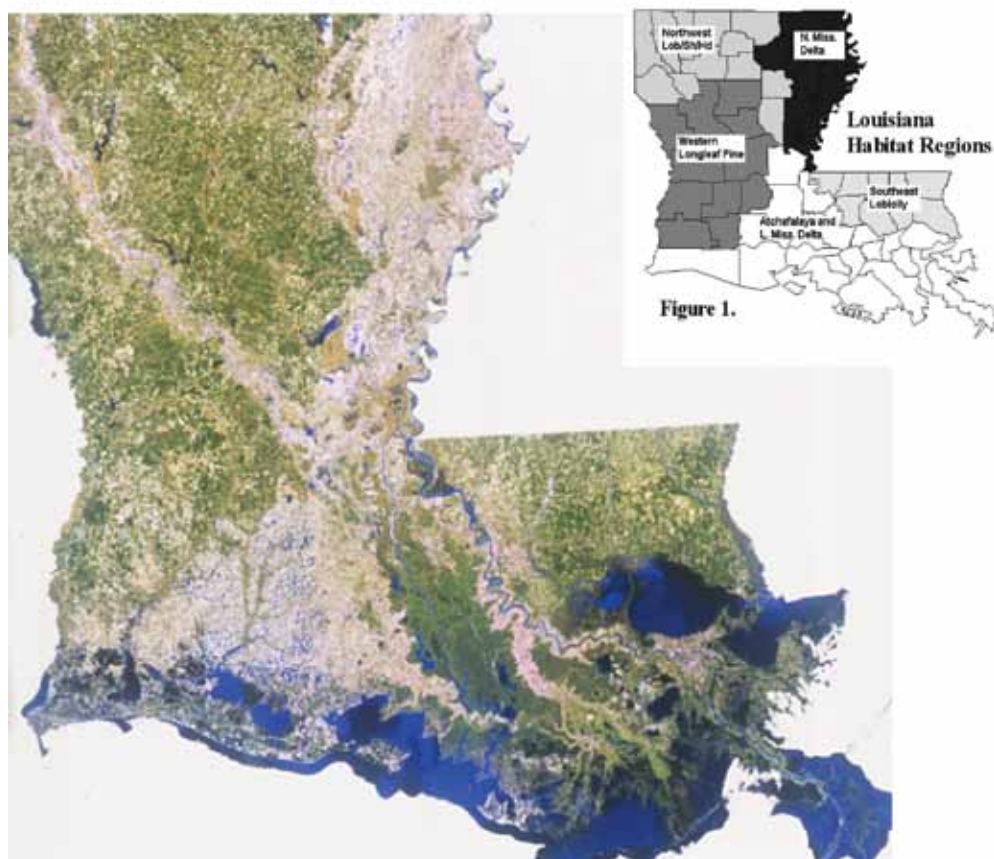
Minden Office	318.371.3050
9961 Hwy 80, Minden LA 71055	
Monroe Office	318.343.4044
368 Centurytel Dr., Monroe LA 71203	
Pineville Office	318.487.5885
1995 Shreveport Hwy., Pineville LA 71334	
Lake Charles Office	337.491.2575
1213 North Lakeshore Dr., Lake Charles LA 70601	
Opelousas Office	337.948.0255
5652 Hwy. 182, Opelousas LA 70570	
Hammond Office	985.543.4777
42371 Phyllis Ann Dr., Hammond LA 70403	



# APPENDICES



# APPENDIX A



## LOUISIANA FOREST HABITAT OVERVIEW

**Total Land Base** - 32,430,000 acres (80%)

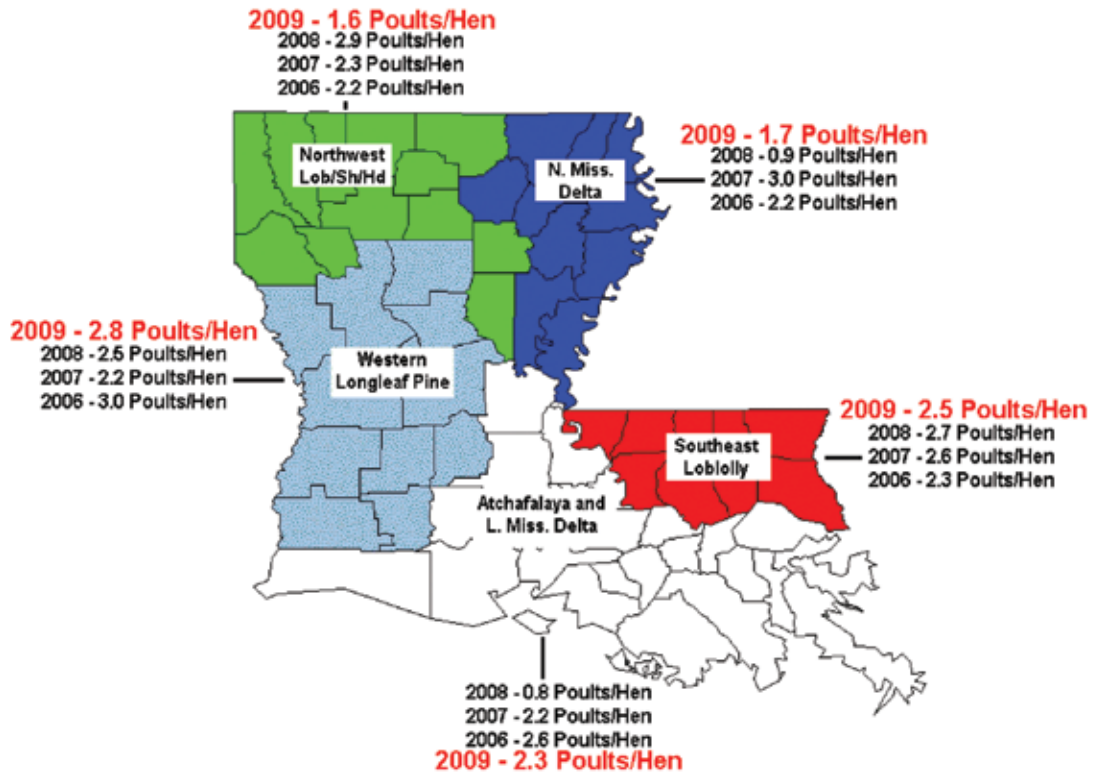
**Total Forest Land** - 14,100,000 acres (43%)

### Ownership Pattern

1. Private - 12,430,000 acres (88%)
  - a. Non-industrial - 8,470,000 acres (60%)
  - b. Industry - 3,960,000 acres (28%)
2. Public - 1,670,000 (12%)
  - a. State:
    - i. LDWF - 460,000 acres
    - ii. Other State - 210,000 acres
  - b. Federal:
    - i. Kisatchie National Forest - 605,000 acres
    - ii. National Wildlife Refuge - 225,000 acres
    - iii. Other - 170,000 acres

# APPENDIX B

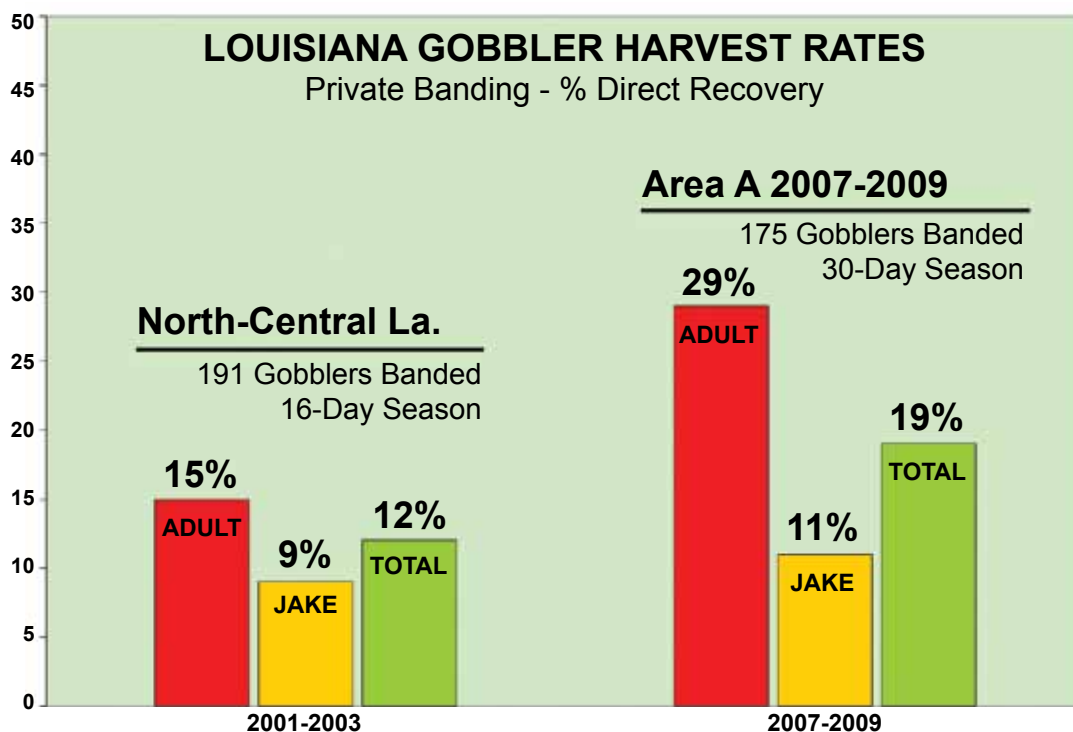
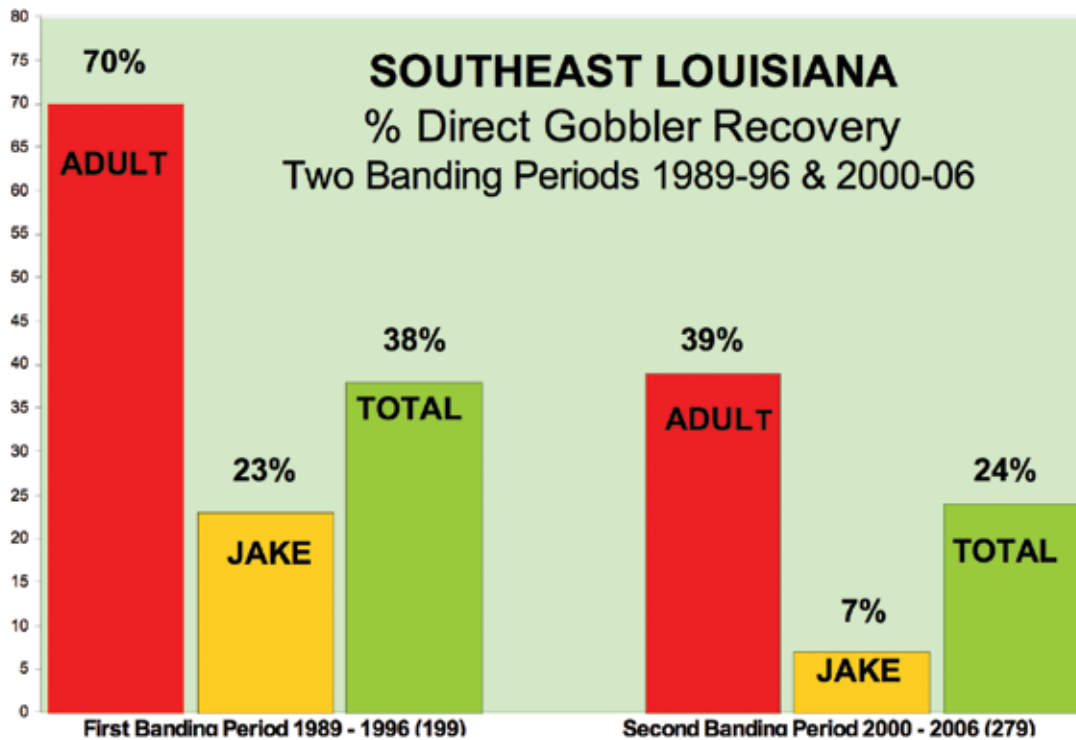
## LOUISIANA WILD TURKEY POULT PRODUCTION INDEX 2009



POULT PER HEN (PPH) PRODUCTION CATEGORIES	
Excellent	4 PPH or higher
Very Good	3.3 - 3.9 PPH
Good	2.6 - 3.2 PPH
Fair	2 - 2.5 PPH
Poor	Below 2 PPH

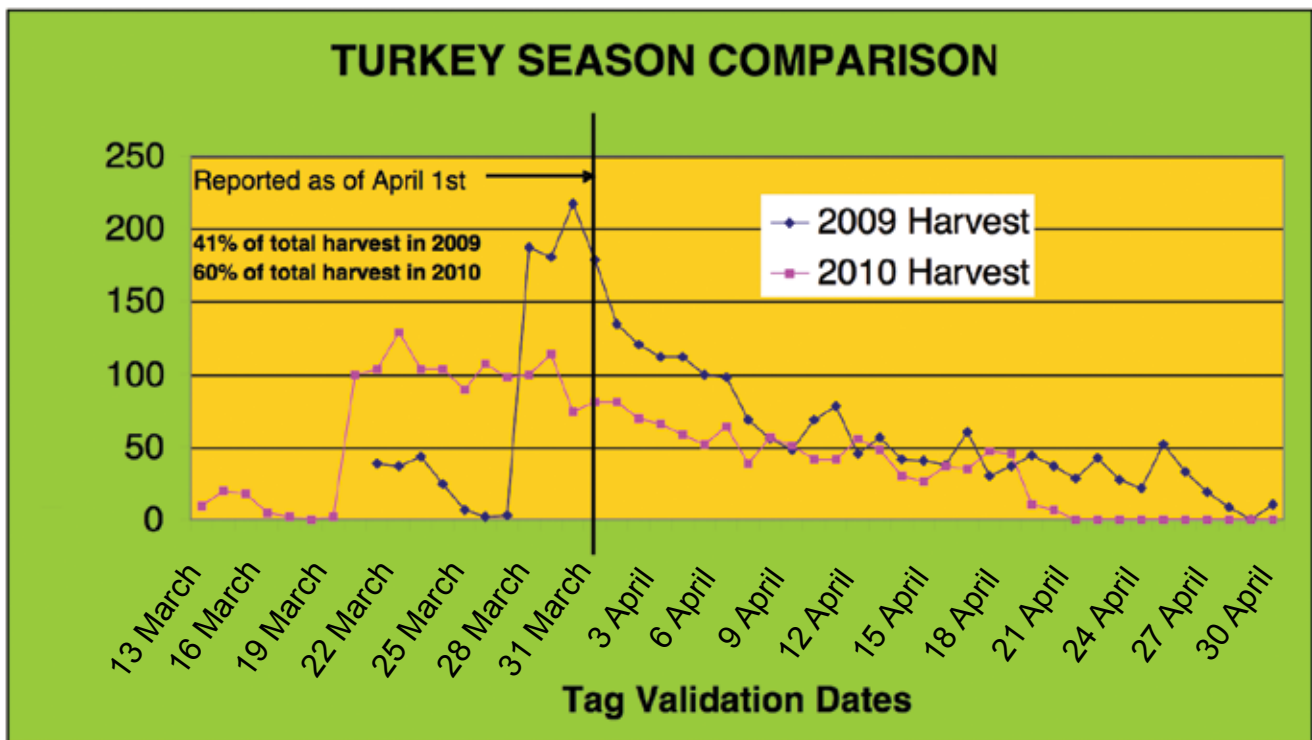
2009 POULT PRODUCTION INDEX		
Habitat Type	2009	16-Year Average
Western Longleaf Pine	2.8	3.4
Northern Mississippi Delta	1.7	3.2
Northwestern Loblolly/Shelterwood/Hardwood	1.6	3
Southern Atchafalaya/Lower Mississippi Delta	2.3	2.5
Southeastern Loblolly Pine	2.5	2.4

# APPENDIX C



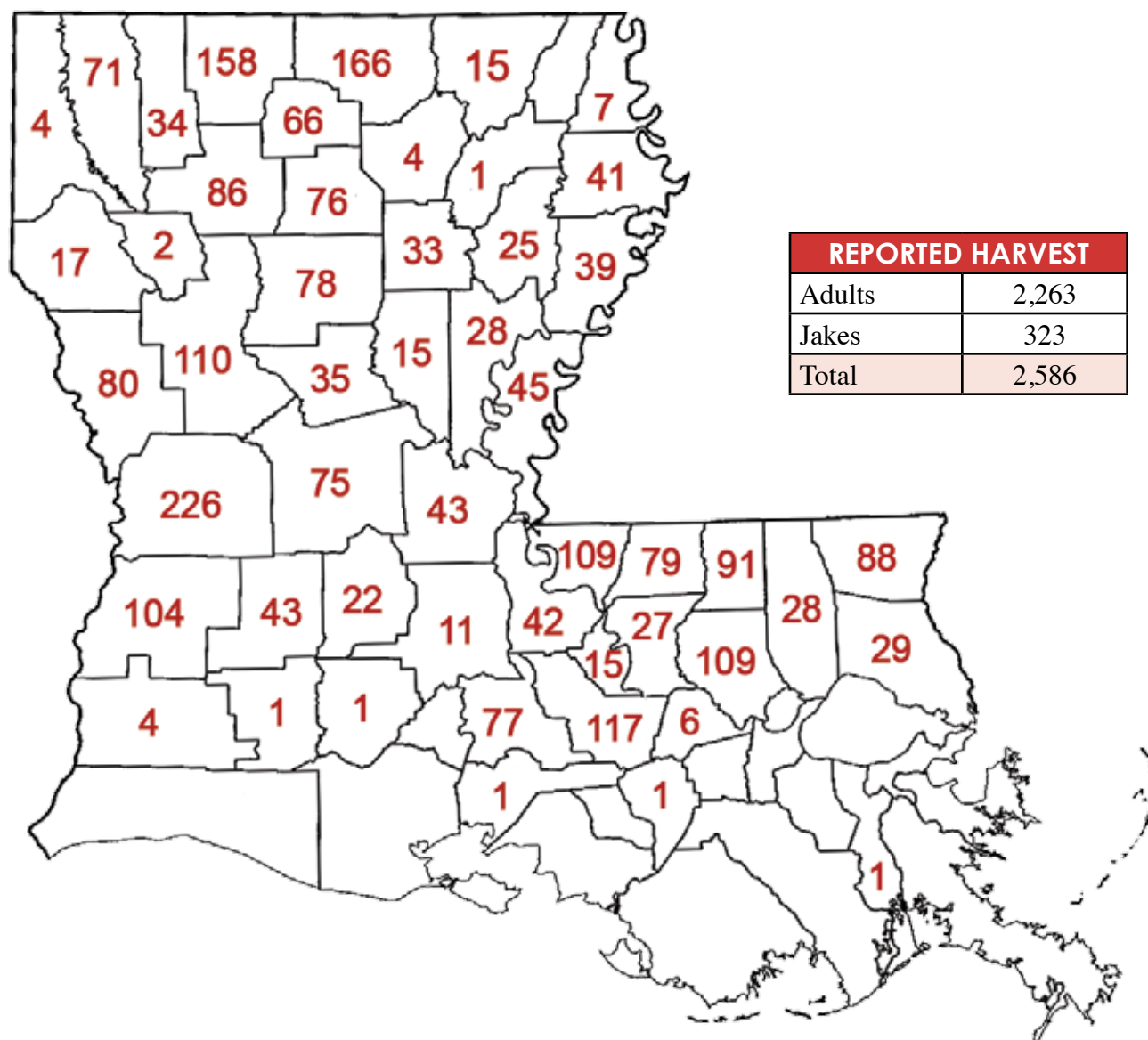


# APPENDIX D



# APPENDIX E

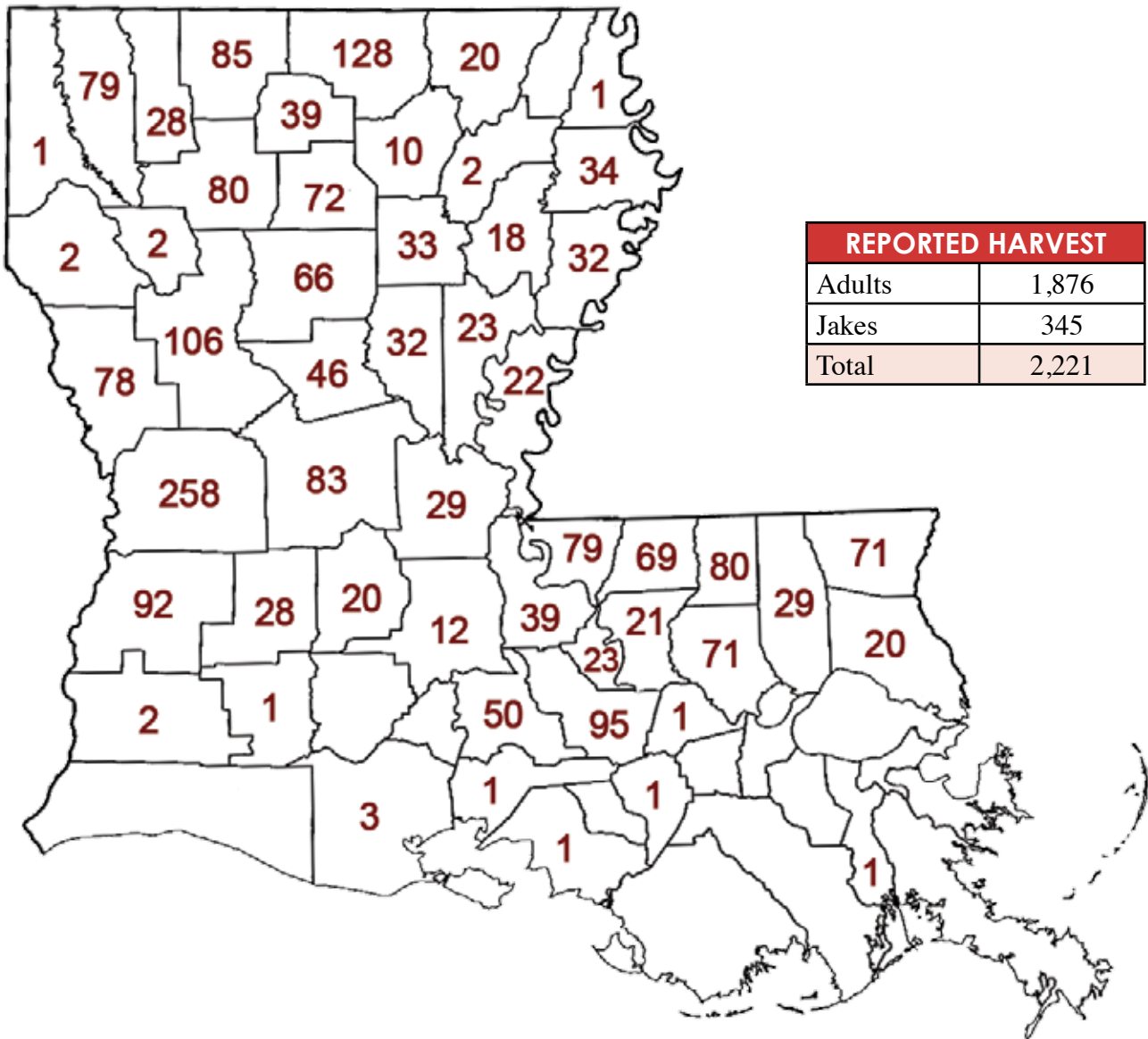
## 2009 REPORTED WILD TURKEY HARVEST



*\*Turkeys reported in closed coastal parishes are likely reporting errors.*

# APPENDIX F

## 2010 REPORTED WILD TURKEY HARVEST



*\*Turkeys reported in closed coastal parishes are likely reporting errors.*



